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3 April 1984

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CAIRO'S GOVERNOR DISCUSSES CITY'S DEVELOPMENT

Cairo CAIRO TODAY in English Jan 84 pp 29-30

[Excerpt]

Becoming Governor of Cairo nine months ago brought Major General Yusuf Sabri Abu Taléb back to his "origins," he says.

Born in Shubra in 1929, he graduated from the Military Academy in 1948 as a second lieutenant in the artillery and immediately saw action in Gaza. For the next thirty-two years he pursued his career in the military, rising by 1973 to Chief of Staff for all the artillery of Egypt's second and third armies, then to Director of Artillery for five years. Next he was Assistant to the Minister of Defense before being appointed Governor of Northern Sinai in 1980. He served in that post for two and one-half years, then worked as Minister of Popular Development for six months before being appointed Governor of Cairo in March, 1983.

Major General Abu Taléb holds a diploma in military science and attended training courses in the United States in 1954 and the Soviet Union in 1958. He is married and has a son, doing his residency at New Orleans University Hospital, and two married daughters. Cairo Today's reporter Neil MacFarquhar talked to him about various issues in late November.

*CT: There was master plan drawn up in the mid-1960's for the development of the city.
Has it been updated recently?*

The Governor: The final study for the master plan of Cairo is being carried out now under the supervision of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development with the help of a French advisory group and the Planning Authority of Greater Cairo. We have revised the preliminary reports which have been officially approved and the whole thing is nearly finished. All the construction now underway is being done according to the plan, but it still needs many appendices, such as the traffic plan and other related plans.

CT: Is there a list of priorities within the plan?

The Governor: Yes of course. First of all it defines the nature and size of the city in the year 2000, and it says that Cairo must not exceed 16 million. This needs a lot of control: if family size and internal immigration are not controlled, the population will reach 20 million. I personally feel that we should keep Cairo, at least the main part of the city, to the existing population level of about 10 million.

That is the first part of the master plan. The second part concerns the distribution of population within the main area limited by the projected ring road around Cairo. Land use both within and outside the ring road has been determined--where the city will be extended and where unused areas will be. Outside the ring road will be satellites.

CT: So coping with the population is the most important issue within the master plan? Is that also the priority for Cairo in the national five-year plan?

The Governor: Yes. And of course the development of Cairo especially the development of the city's infrastructure, is covered by the five-year plan. Financing for the sewage projects, the water supply pipeline network and treatment plants is allotted within this five-year plan, with some in the next five-year plan as well.

Another important development issue is the housing problem. We should build about 150 thousand new units within the next five years. We have about 50 thousand units currently under construction in Medinat el Salam, Zawya el Hamra and Ein Shams. These are under the supervision of the governorate.

CT: Are the public housing projects being built for the poor?

The Governor: They are designed mainly for the poor people. We don't charge them for the infrastructure. Although in the next step of planning we intend to start charging them for the land and for the infrastructure. Because, you know, when you charge them and they pay over thirty years it amounts to a considerable sum which we can then use as capital for development in other directions. We can use this revolving fund to extend the infrastructure.

And the next problem for the city is that of transport and communications, and our plan for this falls into two strategic lines. First of all we have to improve the flow of transport in the main access routes and highways, Salah Salem and the new Malik Khalid and the ring road. That is why we are concentrating now on the ring road which will allow traffic to bypass Cairo. The other part of this plan is to build the flyovers and bridges along the main lateral and longitudinal axes to achieve an even flow of traffic.

The 6th October Bridge will be extended to Ghamra by the end of next year and after it will be extended to Abba-siyya and then to the Ismailia Desert Road.

In addition, we are building Al-Azhar flyover, and the Zamalek/Abul Ela flyover, and eventually we will connect these two so that you will be able to reach Opera, then Ataba, Azhar and Salah Salem on one uninterrupted highway. Al-Azhar bridge will be finished by next April, and it will be an achievement for Cairo. Zamalek is under study now, but it will be finished to Abul Ela bridge by the end of 1984. Abul Ela to Opera is also under study now, and we hope that ultimately all these bridges and flyovers will be a help to the flow of traffic.

CT: If the price of gasoline was less subsidized could you cut down on the number of cars in the streets? Would people drive less?

The Governor: Of course. But subsidies need to be decreased gradually, especially those on gasoline, and some means of limiting private cars and increasing public transportation will be found. As you know the underground is now under construction and at the moment we are suffering so that it can be finished. It should help. In all there will be about 42 kilometers of track above ground, from Helwan to Bab el Luq and

CT: Can anything be done to limit private cars downtown?

The Governor: To limit the right of way of private cars would be very difficult. But of course the number of cars could be limited in many ways. Limitations on the import of cars are now under study. We could limit them by the model of car to be imported. We now permit models up to five years old. We may limit it to two years, or of course we could increase customs for new cars. We could also restrict the number of licenses.

The other direction in which we are moving on this issue is building multi-storey garages. We have already received bids for eleven multi-storey garages in the Central Business District (CBD). Nine of them will be in the CBD area and two in Heliopolis. These are planned

to have ten thousand places for cars. We have received the bids and expect to start construction almost immediately.

We now have the parking area behind Al-Ahram with a capacity of 2500 cars. We established this area and also we prevented buses and minibuses from parking in the CBD area, and we feel that because of this the traffic is a little better despite cutting Ramses Street in half for the construction of the metro. Also we prevented parking on one side of Orabi and Talaat Harb Streets, and that is why the flow is much better.

Once the garages are finished, we will prevent parking on one side of all the streets, and there will be no parking at all on streets within a 500 meter radius of the garages. I hope we will eliminate the traffic problem within two years. I am an optimist.

But you know Cairo's traffic problem is unique. In places like Washington or Paris or London you can go from one district to another, or to any place without passing through the capital. But in Cairo the CBD area between Salah Salem and the Nile is the only link between Upper and lower Egypt and has been for thousands of years.

Cairo has a special geographic position and that's why we have to build a ring road to allow cars and trucks to bypass Cairo.

CT: What about the bus fleet? And could the Nile buses be used more?

The Governor: We intend to double the bus fleet. We have a loan from the world Bank to build a central workshop and training center. We especially need to train the drivers because we can't increase the bus fleet without drivers. But we intend to double the fleet within the next five years. As for the Nile, it has to be used for buses and for the transportation of goods.

CT: Could you tell us a little about the coordination of the various development plans?

The Governor: We have formed two committees: The Higher Committee for Coordination headed by the Deputy Governor. It sits weekly with the Chairman of the Sewage Authority, Water Authority and the Traffic Director, plus someone from the Electricity Authority and the department for paving roads and all others concerned. They have a preparatory committee to prepare all the items for discussion and they sit together and coordinate: who, what where, and when.

I feel that we have achieved a 70 to 75 percent success in coordination and that is why I believe that despite carrying out all of the work for the underground the traffic has not been affected too much.

The other thing which I have formed is an operational room for the governorate as a whole and a subsidiary operational room connected to the governorate in each district. They receive reports of any break in the sewer system or the electricity or the water supply or any other complaints. They make sure that this breakdown is stopped immediately and they move all the authorities and follow up until it is repaired.

I believe we are suffering less, that there is no longer water on the streets for ten or twenty days. The situation is better but it is not finished, we have to finish the big projects. But now we have good control. Especially since the operational group follows up on the High Committee to see who is digging where, and they make sure that each group is on the spot at the planned time and doing the work.

CT: We noticed that you are using the army more as well.

The Governor: It is more disciplined and we use it.

CAIRO'S WATER AND DRAINAGE PROJECTS REVIEWED

Cairo CAIRO TODAY in English Jan 84 pp 31-38

[Article by Neil MacFarquhar: "Calling in the Plumbers"]

[Text] Cairenes seem inured to the erratic behavior of the city's antiquated water and sewage system and to the government's attempts to repair and expand it. They install pumps where possible or rise early to fill pots and pans with water against daytime supply interruptions, and they cross sewer-flooded streets with few complaints. But they grumble, and in the past the grumbling has changed to anger when they feel the problem is being ignored.

In 1981, for example, the residents of the Abu Seoud section of Old Cairo marched en masse to the offices of the local government. "The people were angry because the sewage was always here," said one resident of the area. (No one could go in or out of his house without passing through the dirty water.) The demonstrations were to make the officials come look at the place, to come see how we live."

The government had already taken a look realizing in the mid-1970s that the water and sewage systems were crumbling underneath them. Master plans for new systems were drawn up and the massive funding sought. But the formalities of international aid take time, and each new mechanical breakdown underscores the urgency of the problem, especially with the sewers.

"Any crisis focuses people's attention, they realize the consequences of not doing something," said Fred Guymont, USAID Project Officer for the Cairo Wastewater Project. "It is unfortunate that it has to reach that point but it makes it a lot easier selling the necessity for making the investment."

Currently, most of the LE400 million needed for the overhaul of the waterworks has been financed and the construction is well under way.

But only about one billion of the three billion needed for the new sewer system has been funded. Improvements in the water supply without concomitant development of a wastewater disposal system could increase sewer flooding.

There have been discussions between President Hosni Mubarak and top USAID officials about the United States committing one billion dollars to the

project over five years, with annual amounts subject to Congressional approval and bilateral negotiations between the two governments.

In the meantime, the antediluvian systems need to be rehabilitated and expanded. "Although we still need to obtain funding, we are starting," said a top official from the Organisation for the Execution of the Greater Cairo Waste-water Project (CWO).

Cairo's first modern water distribution system was completed in 1874, and the sewage network in 1915 (see box). The two systems, now showing their age, are the basis for the current services. The combination of stop-gap maintenance and a huge increase in demand due to the enormous growth in population makes replacement of the two system imperative. "The system as a whole received inadequate maintenance over many years," said a recent CWO report.

The General Organization for Greater Cairo Water Supply (GOGCWS) produces 2.3 million cubic meters of potable water a day for what they estimate as 10 million consumers. Most of the water is surface water--basically from the Nile--although 400 to 500 thousand cubic meters a day (cmd) comes from wells. The water is processed in 11 filtration plants and shipped through 3200 kilometers of pipes, of which 12% are more than 40 years old.

Production comes out to approximately 270 liters per capita per day, which "is sufficient for anyone's needs," said Engineer Hussein Talaat, GOGCWS Chairman. However, all of the water does not go directly from the filtration plants to the consumers. Leakage from the distribution pipes subtracts about 20% of supply, somewhat higher than the worldwide standard of 8% and again attributed to the age of the system.

This brings real supply down to about 240 liters per capita, and widespread misuse further diminishes actual distribution levels. The main infringers are public taps and government buildings. There are 600 public taps in Cairo, serving what a 1980 AUC study estimated as the 25% of the population living in buildings not connected to the water supply. Although each district governorate is supposed to hire a caretaker for the taps, most are unmanned and left running day and night. GOGCWS is seeking financial help from the Cairo governorate to combat this problem by hiring the necessary guards.

Government buildings also consistently waste water. "Since they don't pay for consumption, no one is interested in maintaining the fixtures," said Engineer Talaat. Thus in courts, office buildings, and mos-

ques throughout the city there is constant leakage from taps.

GOGCWS estimates that between the taps and public buildings alone 120 million cubic meters are wasted of the total annual production of 1 billion cubic meters.

This additional 12% misuse does not take into account the wastage in apartments and other private dwellings. Continuous dripping is rarely fixed because the fee for the plumber is more than the cost of the extra water. Average water bills for an entire month's consumption run to about two pounds, and a plumber charges three to five pounds per visit.

Thus one of the main tasks of the GOGCWS is educating the population to combat wastage and to this end a massive advertising campaign has been launched. This campaign "will take some time," before it has an impact on the Egyptian consumer, said Engineer Talaat.

The main thrust of the current work is to replace old equipment and to raise capacity to satisfy demand through the year 2000.

But an increased amount of water put into the system has to be removed, and thus the capacity of the wastewater system has to approach that for water.

Currently, the capacity of the waste water system is about 1.8 million cmd, half a million cmd below that for the water system. The gap continues to grow as the expansion and renovation of the water system outpaces that for sewage and ultimately some of the new capacity for water will have to be held back to allow the sewage system to catch up.

"We are trying to overcome the difference, but there is a big shortfall, said a top CWO official

Sewers run through about 80% of the city and approximately 65% of the population is connected.

Fundamentally, the lines are just not large enough to handle the water used in Cairo, much less the solid wastes – trash from the streets, for example – which are dumped into open manholes.

There are other problems: there have been extensive deposits of sediments over the years and *mazut*, the low-grade fuel oil used in many bakeries, ends up in the wastewater system where it congeals and forms a tough mass diminishing the size of the pipes.

Water dumped by the tanneries in Old Cairo has a high lime content which calcifies when it gets into the pipes, decreasing the effective diameter of the pipes in that area by as much as one half. The flooding in the streets is thus caused either by overflow when there is more water in the pipe than it is designed to handle or by partially blocked pipes.

In addition many of the system's pumping units, more than 50 years old and strained beyond capacity, are subject to frequent breakdowns or "have suffered such considerable wear that their present performance is significantly below their rated output," said one CWO report.

Inadequate mechanical and electrical maintenance causes frequent breakdowns, and some of the pump stations are now operated by hand.

The CWO report also states that aside from the pumps, "much of the ancillary equipment such as screens, control panels and circuit breakers is now in poor condition or non-operable."

In terms of treating the effluent the system is equally decrepit. Except for the Zenein plant in Giza which was built in 1970, none of the treatment plants

process the effluent to an acceptable standard. Even if the capability of all treatment works was fully utilized, over 25% of the total present sewage flow would receive no treatment whatsoever," said the CWO report. As it is, little of the current flow is treated, it is dumped raw into the irrigation drains and eventually ends up in Lake Manzala or in the Rosetta branch of the Nile.

Overall the system is "subject to breakdown either by virtue of the deterioration of the fabric or by mechanical or electrical failure," said the report.

Due to the surcharged state of many of the collectors and pipes, it is impossible to get into them to gauge their condition. Thus CWO is trying to strike a balance between rehabilitating the current system while implementing the Gargantuan master plan for the new system. Major breakdowns are always feared.

"You can't predict it. One day you have what seems to be a perfectly good pipe and the next day you don't" said a senior engineer with AMBRIC, the consortium of American and British consultants advising CWO on the design and execution of the wastewater project.

In the spring of 1965 there was a major drainage crisis when sewers throughout the city especially in the lower sections near the river, backed up and overflowed, "covering streets and filling basements with an odoriferous sludge," said historian Janet Abu-Lughod in her Cairo history.

Due to the continued growth in quantity of wastewater such flooding has become more common and therefore seemingly less urgent, but the causes remain the same: lack of sufficient investment.

For the decade before 1965 there were reports that the system was collapsing but due to insufficient foreign currency reserves no extensive renovations were made.

The governorate concentrated on patching operations. In response to the 1965 crisis, the '100 Days Project' was implemented, a frantic three months of replacements and enlargements.

Unfortunately in the haste to get the job done, steel pipes were used, which are not very good for sewers as they are subject to corrosion and can be eaten

away by bacteria. Essentially they planned a time bomb, and in late 1982, one of the steel pipes in Giza, a force main used to feed sewage from the pumping stations to the treatment plant, began leaking without warning.

Due to the surcharged state of the pipes, any leak causes the wastewater "to shoot out of the pipe like a jet," said an engineer. Sections of Giza were soon awash, and it was discovered that the pipe was "badly corroded," said a CWO official, and had to be replaced by one of ductile cast iron.

Government officials worked around the clock and a tremendous amount of work was completed in just 20 days, but the water supply had to be drastically reduced because the sewage system would not have been able to drain the water, and further flooding would have ensued.

Residents lined up at electricity plants and other utilities to fill pots, pans, and buckets with water. The lines were continuous from early morning until seven in the evening. "The people were angry," said one resident, "their complacent attitude disappeared."

But government officials continuously stress that obtaining the funding to replace the beleaguered systems is among their top priorities.

And when any part of the system collapses due to its age, they react promptly. At Abu Seoud in old Cairo, the government gave a direct order that the work begin without foreign aid, realizing that the year-long bidding process inherent in most aid projects was too long to wait.

Under the current five-year plan, scheduled to end in fiscal 1986, major improvements are expected in both systems.

Although costs for the replacement and renovation of the water works are higher than initially estimated, implementation of the project will be quicker and less expensive than that of the sewer system because there are fewer problems.

The basic complaints are lack of pressure and the amount of sea sand or

other particles in the water. Both these problems should be resolved by enlarged capacity and more modern equipment at existing filtration plants in addition to new plants, reservoirs, and hundreds of kilometers of pipes. Projects include:

- a loan from West Germany for DM 60 million (\$22.2 million) plus LE 20 million for a new filtration plant at Imbaba. It is currently producing half its projected capacity and should reach full capacity of 300 thousand cmd by next summer.
- A 9.5 million Kuwaiti dinar (\$32.5 million) loan from the Arab Fund for a 600,000 cmd filtration plant at Fustat. The plant is to be built before 1986.
- Loans and grants totalling \$91.4 million from USAID plus LE 35 million for rebuilding the southern half of the Rod el Farag filtration plant and doubling its capacity to 600,000 cmd. The first stage will be finished next summer and the projected completion date is December, 1985.
- A loan from the Japanese government for 18.1 billion yen (\$77.2 million) for the main pipelines for the new distribution system and 10 reservoir tanks, much of which is completed or currently under construction.

In total, the projected capacity for the water supply system will be 3.4 million cmd. Increasing the capacity will also require replacing the pipes, since low operating pressures are frequently used to avoid ruptures and major leakage in older and weakened pipes. The size of the pipes will be increased in areas of chronic shortage.

In Garden City, for example, the water supply system was designed to fulfill the needs for the quarter's numerous villas and is woefully inadequate for the increasing number of large apartment houses that have sprouted in the area. The 200 millimeter main line, whose actual diameter is closer to 100 millimeters, will be replaced by 300 millimeter pipe.

The size of the pipe being installed is being determined by the buildings in a given area rather than by population, because exact figures and projections for the latter are not available. "From a technical point of

view, we have a lack of information," said Engineer Talaat.

Implementing the master plan for water involves replacing everything put in before 1950 while minimizing the disruption to the supply. At Rod el Farag, for example, the sedimentation basins—an outdated system used in settling dirt and other particles out of the water—date from 1903. They are being destroyed in two stages and replaced by what will be the largest plant in Cairo.

Under the old filtration system, the plant consisted of nine sedimentation basins and four clarifiers. Clarifiers are similar to

sedimentation basins, except chemicals are added to the water which cause particles such as silt and algae to coagulate "like snow flakes," said one engineer, and then drop to the bottom, thus speeding the filtration process.

In the first stage of the work the four old clarifiers and four of the nine sedimentation basins were leveled. In order to maintain a constant supply the five remaining basins were modified to make them operate more efficiently. 'Baffle' walls, which resemble a maze, were constructed across the first fifth of each of the basins, thus slowing down the movement of the water and increasing the time available for the particles to settle out.

Chlorine is added to the water to make it biologically safe. Currently, all chemical additions are done manually and not monitored to insure continuity. With the new system of 10 clarifiers and 14 filters, automatic chemical dispensing units will be added to make sure that the level is consistent.

The renovation will also include new pumping stations and large reservoirs to insure that there is enough storage capacity to keep the pumps running smoothly at all times. "You need a certain head of water for the pumps to work efficiently," said John Green, local director of Howard, Harbert, Jones, the joint venture consortium in charge of rebuilding Rod el Farag.

Finally, the existing raw water intake system will have to be totally rebuilt to handle the requirements of the new plant. Two 96-inch diameter pipes will stretch 175 meters out into the Nile. The pipes will be laid under the river bed and then turn up into the water. They will be laid underwater and inspected by a team of divers.

A pumping station on the bank will take the water from the Nile and move it through two 72-inch pipes under the Corniche to the new plant. The Nile, according to Green, "is a very, very polluted source but with good treatment we can produce safe water."

The one major unsettled question in the water project is how all the loans will be repaid and continued maintenance assured. The government wants the system to pay for itself, but this would require removing the subsidy on water.

Money is of major concern on the wastewater project as well, as the government continues to look for sources for the minimum two billion dollars it still needs to implement the entire master plan by the year 2000.

When the plan was first designed by Taylor & Binnie and Partners in 1977, it was anticipated that the project would be funded with the help of Arab development funds, since they had underwritten the initial study. But hope for

this dried up when such funding was cut after the peace treaty with Israel. The master plan was later reviewed, and according to the estimates at constant 1980 prices, cost for both the east and west banks totalled LE 1.2 billion. But for each year of delay inflation adds 10 percent, so by the time the project got started in 1982 the first stage works were pegged at LE 1.45 billion and complete implementation, for population requirements through the year 2000, another 1.55 billion.

Thus far, the government of Egypt has allotted LE800 million from its five-year budget for the project and USAID has committed \$129 million for rehabilitation work on both banks of the Nile and for new construction on the west bank. The Overseas Development Administration, the international aid organization of the British government, has pledged £52 million sterling for new construction on the east bank.

The Montagu organization, a British consortium headed by Midland Bank and backed by the Export Credits Guarantee Department, is loaning Egypt £100 million sterling, also for each bank construction.

There have been discussions with USAID officials about committing another \$1 billion to the project, but an embassy spokesman said the U.S. Congress wants guarantees that the money will be used exclusively for long-term, lasting projects and not for further stop-gap measures.

Sewers are not considered prestige projects, the high-visibility works that serve as goodwill symbols to the population of Egypt. "A sewer project is only visible in the sense that people can see you working," said Guymont. "Most of the investment is underground. It's not like a power plant, but it is a basic human need."

The astronomical price of the project reflects both the overall size of the city and the magnitude of problems involved. "It's a highly complex engineering project trying to plug a sewer system into a city without disrupting peoples' lives," said Guymont.

The new system has to be positioned to fit in with the old and is projected to serve a population in the year 1000 of 13.5 million people, "(Population) is very hard to predict," said one engineer, echoing the sentiments of the water organization.

Funding and population aside, the bottom line is that the city is in chronic need of a new wastewater disposal system and thus the decision was taken to implement as much of the project as possible as part of the five-year plan, based on whatever financing was available.

Since the current wastewater system had aged another three years between the development of the master plan and the initial financing, it was decided to allot some of the funding to revamping the old

system. "We needed to improve the existing system to insure that it did not fail before the new work was put in," said a senior engineer.

Thus the joint venture firm of Howard, Harbert and Sedalmy is currently working on rehabilitating 52 subsidiary pumping stations, building six new ones, and laying up to 20 kilometers of sewage and force main.

The master plan is broken down into separate units for the east and west banks. On the east bank, a tunnel initially five meters in diameter and changing to four, will be dug from Ameria-north of Shubra-to Maadi.

In Central Cairo, 33 kls. of tunnels from 1.2 to 2.5 meters in diameter will be connected to the main trunk. At Ameria, what will probably be the largest pumping station in the world will be built, including a tunnel pumping station with a capacity of two million cmd and a collectors pumping station with a capacity of 750,000 cmd.

A conveyance system of culverts—shallow square tunnels large enough to drive a car or bus through—will be built to move the sewage from Ameria to a huge treatment plant at al Jabel al Asfar. There will be supplemental pumping stations along the way at Kossous and Khalag with ten pumps each, with a total capacity of 1.85 million cmd.

A new treatment plant at al Jabel al Asfar will ultimately have a capacity of three million cmd. On the west bank, treatment capacity will be increased to 1.33 million cmd and several new pumping stations and culverts will be constructed.

The master plan is basically "a new backbone for the arms and legs of the system," said a senior engineer. "The existing backbone wasn't strong, big or deep enough."

Nor was it very well documented. For the most part the AMBRIC engineers got their maps of the system from CWO, but the existing system had been altered so many times that trying to understand it was "a bit of a detective story," said a senior engineer. Eventually the consultants went

on on-site visits, lifting manhole covers to see which way the flow was going.

On one project, the engineers have had to forgo using machines for digging to avoid damaging the tangle of electric cables, phone lines, and water pipes underground, as well as the dilapidated state of surrounding houses.

But the most challenging part of the overall project is the east bank tunnel, which will be 10 to 20 meters below ground so the existing system can tip its contents into it. The tunnel will be dug entirely underground, using various pressurized techniques to keep out groundwater. Large access manholes will be dug down from the surface about every two kilometers.

A great deal of time has been invested in co-ordinating the project with the planned metro system, highway construction, telephone project, the traffic department, and others. A committee composed of members from all of these groups and the governorate meets constantly to iron out incompatibilities and co-ordinate crossing points.

While there are still a few conflicts between the sewage tunnel and the support pilings for automobile overpasses, for example, the various projects are aware of the requirements of the others. "We can't afford to have any conflict with any major utility," said a CWO official.

The project has been broken into different tenders due to the work involved or the financing. Currently tenders have been received for the pumping station at Ameria, two sections of the tunnel as far as Abdine, and about one-sixth of the 14 kilometer culvert from Ameria to Jabel el Asfar. Also, design work is now being done for 250,000 cmd-worth of the treatment plant, for the remainder of the culvert, for the two supplemental pumping stations, and for the tunnel as far as Dayoura in northern Old Cairo. Once the tunnel is completed as far as Abdine, it will be a "viable system," said one senior engineer.

The Subsidy Issue [boxed item]

"There should be an increase in price to cover our expenses," says Engineer Hussein Talaat, chairman of the General Organization for the Greater Cairo Water Supply (GOGCWS). Large sums have been borrowed abroad to complete the renovation project and the Egyptian government considers the money it budgeted to the Water Organization a loan.

In July, the Cairo City Council approved a price increase from 1.2 piasters to 2 piasters per cubic meter. This is still a "enligible price," said Engineer Talaat, especially when compared with the 60 piasters per cubic meter charged in countries like France and West Germany.

Engineer Talaat would like to see the price raised to 10 piasters per cubic meter which would cover the 5.5 piasters per cubic meter it costs to produce the water plus 4.5 piasters for depreciation of equipment.

The City Council said they would look into another price increase if the Water Organization installs a meter in every apartment in Cairo, allowing for a graduated scale of payment according to consumption.

While it is possible to put meters in new buildings, it would be absolutely impossible to install them in every apartment in Cairo, according to Engineer Talaat.

The bottom line, he says, is that "due to the political situation we are not able to raise prices." The government is still committed to subsidizing low-income households, and it would be unacceptable to try and target the subsidy by residential area.

Engineer Talaat would like to see the Water Organization made into a private company, allowed to set its own rates. The government could then decide what percentage of the rate they would subsidize. He has seen this system working in Tunisia, and says it "would prevent the (financial) problems from becoming a burden."

But he concedes that such a change is not likely in his term in office: "President Hosni Mubarak is looking for changes, but slowly in order not to give a shock to the people."

CSO: 4500/50

COPPER PRODUCTION INCREASES

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 31 Jan 84 p 4

[Article by P. S. Ramanathan]

[Text]

MUSCAT — A 90 per cent increase in copper production is expected this year at Sohar, 250km north of Muscat, according to Sultanate of Oman's Petroleum and Minerals Minister, Mr Said Ahmed Said Al Shanfari.

Talking to Khaleej Times yesterday he said that exports this year could be 14,234 tonnes, which could fetch over 21 million dollars.

The average monthly production of copper, in anodes/ingots of 99.9 per cent purity, is currently 700 tonnes, which is to reach 1318 by the end of the year.

Copper in refined form alone is being exported and the facilities available at Mina Qaboos are adequate for the purpose.

Mr Shanfari said, an export jetty would be ready soon at Sohar where the Oman Mining Company's \$213 million copper complex was working.

Plans are under study for establishing down-stream industries, like pipes and cables, in conjunction with the copper project.

Chromite ore is being extracted by Omco since 1982 at two sites, one within its concession area and the other to the north of Nakhal. Large quantities have been stockpiled, ready for shipment, pending price settlement with overseas buyers. Meanwhile, several tonnes of crude chromite ore have been despatched to some foreign companies, at the rate of 150 dollars per tonne. These companies are to perform studies on ore quality and help Omco establish the future market price.

Negotiations are in progress with a neighbouring country on sharing of port facilities for chromite ore exports, the minister said.

Chromite ore transportation would involve bulk movement and it is felt that the Muscat port can be spared of it, inter alia, easing the pressure on road traffic in the Capital area.

As for oil exploration, Mr Shanfari said Oman's policy was guided by the domestic financial requirements. As compared to last year, the yield now is 400,000 barrels per day—a 25 per cent improvement. The increase has been effected in order to augment revenues, following the Opec benchmark slide to 29 dollars from 34 dollars per barrel. (Though not a member of the Opec, Oman has closely adhered to Opec's policies.)

The crude production may be increased to 450,000 bpd in 1985, but Mr Shanfari emphasised, "it all depends on the authorities' directives."

Japan, which currently accounts for 60 per cent of Oman's crude exports, is expected to take in another 5 per cent this year (55 per cent in 1983).

The proposed AGCC refinery in Oman can have a refining capacity of 250,000 bpd. A decision on the site and other details is yet to emerge.

(At present, Oman Refinery Company at Mina Al Fahal is refining 50,000 bpd, for domestic consumption).

The minister praised Opec efforts at getting prices and production stabilised and expressed optimism on the evolution of a pan-Arab pipeline which can provide necessary feeds-

tock for the AGCC refinery.

In a related statement, Mr Shanfari hoped that major copper producers in the world would come to some constructive understanding and peg prices at reasonable levels. Chile, Zambia and the United States had copper in plenty for extraction, but it will be in the interest of all concerned to go a bit slow on production and to be realistic on pricing, he said.

"We are newcomers in the copper arena, and we are yet studying the many facets of it . . . but experience in other fields can be a pointer to everyone, and corrective measures can be initiated at an early stage," Mr Shanfari said.

CSO: 4400/181

PLANS TO BOOST AGRICULTURE

Dubayy KHALEEL TIMES in English 2 Feb 84 p 4

[Article by P. S. Ramanathan]

[Text]

THE Cabinet meeting last Saturday presided over by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos provided positive pointers to the future growth of the Omani economy.

At the outset, Sultan Qaboos stressed the soundness of the economy and reiterated the need to accelerate the pace of economic development in the country. He singled out the farm and fisheries sector as one that needed increased investment.

Future plans would include a careful selection of promising areas for cultivation in this country marked by its varied geographical features and soil conditions. The Omani monarch said that extra efforts should be made to improve yields from date-palm groves.

"Development work in all fields will continue unabated, to improve the standard of living of the Omani people," the Sultan told the cabinet.

It may be pointed out that the country's general budget for 1984, which envisages a total revenue of RO1561 million and an expenditure of RO1765 million, shows a marked leaning towards non-oil revenues (RO170 million as against 130 million in 1983) and development loans (RO166 million as against RO122 million last year). On the expenditure side, the Agriculture and Fisheries Bank gets RO5 million, a million more than last year. The RO204-million deficit, which is lower by RO3 mil-

lion from the 1983 deficit (RO207 million), is expected to spur extra efforts from the people to boost production in the light of the new priorities being set by the authorities.

Even as the non-oil sector, particularly the traditional farm and fisheries sector, is being subjected to intensified activity, the fact that immediate realisation to offset deficits has to come in from the oilfields is not being overlooked. Already, crude production is 25 per cent higher than the 1983 figure of 320,000 barrels per day, and indications are that another 11 per cent boost, to 500,000 bpd, is possible by 1985, depending on the country's needs.

A point that is repeatedly stressed by the authorities here is that development activities in Oman, both in oilfields and non-oil sectors, are tempered by domestic considerations, not by any external influence. The Petroleum and Minerals Resources Minister, Mr Said Ahmed Said al-Shanfari, for instance, said last week that Oman's improved daily yields had nothing to do with the threats relating to the Strait of Hormuz as reported by an international news agency but was in conformity with a well-planned production strategy.

Back to the farm and fisheries front, development in this sector is being coordinated with the Water Resources Council which has Agriculture and Fisheries Minister Abdul Hafidh Salim Rajab as

Deputy Chairman. At the meeting held on Sunday, the progress on the implementation of last year's decisions was assessed with special reference to the 'salinity aspect'.

Following incessant and indiscriminate digging of wells in certain areas, a threat of salinity creeping into the water-belt seems to be arising and the authorities last year took immediate action in controlling well-sinking activities and initiating a full-fledged study.

The Water Resources Council is studying the report on the salinity of water resources in Suweiq and an area between Wadi Al Anooma and Wadi Bin Ghafer. Simultaneously, another report on surface drainage and its possible impact on underground water resources in the Wadi Al Jizzi area is also under study.

While the setting in of a few imbalances is inherent with any intensive development, the strength of the Omani economy is in its planned progress, periodic assessment and timely re-alignment of priorities. The inter-linking of farm development with water resources is a major task in itself, and the coordination of state efforts with free enterprise, buttressing the entrepreneurs' role with financial and moral support, speaks volumes for the authorities' commitment.

In the early stages of development, after His Majesty Sultan Qaboos assumed office in 1970, a tendency was in evidence of people from the rural farm belt going in for instant-return trading enterprises. This caused a manpower vacuum in the fields, but now emphasis is being laid on commercial farming on modern lines to check the drift.

While there are indications that

agriculture and agroindustry may well represent the cornerstone of the Sultanate's diversification policy—and deliberate planning at enlisting the support of the farmer is being pursued at different levels—efforts are on to establish a public authority for the marketing of fresh Omani farm produce. The move is based on the thinking that, given necessary incentives, farmers will help to improve quality and quantity and lessen the need for imported agricultural produce.

As things are now, in the absence of purposeful production from the farm front and a well-marked-out marketing strategy, as much as 30 per cent of the country's produce gets wasted on the one hand, while imports continue on the other. According to a Dutch consultancy firm, which conducted a study into farm production and marketing recently, evolution of a national marketing network can bolster farmers' efforts and there can even be some surplus for export.

The public authority's prime objective will be to provide a link between farmers and private traders, through the establishment of an organised marketing network comprising collection and distribution centres and a nerve-centre for operations in the Capital area. Contracts, worth RO 6.6 million, for the construction of 11 distribution centres, a collection centre and the 'nerve centre', have been awarded.

Meanwhile, the public authority has set up a price data collection system for a large number of agricultural products in markets throughout the country. Since the organisation is at the development stage, Omani nationals can be groomed to take charge of operations.

INDIAN BANK IN OMAN SUCCESSFUL

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 11 Feb 84 p 13

[Text]

MUSCAT—India's top nationalised bank, Bank of Baroda, has done well in its overseas operations in Oman in 1983.

According to provisional figures available here, deposits totalled RO 4.65 million against RO 3.5 million 1982 and advances stood at RO2.58 million (RO 2.48 million).

According to senior manager K.M. Desai, the current year (1984) can beget comparatively better results, as the bank has finalised a blueprint for purposeful disbursement of deposits to sustain projects with good growth potential.

The profit for 1983 at RO57,929 would look like in a low key as compared to the previous year's RO155,186 and RO158,800 of 1980, but it is understood that the bank has made provision for nearly RO128,000 towards tax for the 1977-82 period.

The bank has three branches, at Muttrah Corniche, Ruwi and Salalah. Mr Desai said two more branches could commence operations before the year-end, with due permission from the Central Bank of Oman. (The CBO policy for branch banking is that commercial banks should focus on unbanked regions; for every branch opened in unbanked regions, a bank could become eligible for a branch in a thinly-branched sector).

The highlight of last year's performance is that the bank could mobilise Rs 33,136 from Oman-based Indians, through NRE Rupee Certificates of varying maturity.

"With 13 per cent interest, the certificates assure a compound return at nearly 16.5 per cent—such facilities

are seldom matched elsewhere, and naturally have gained in popularity with Indian non-residents," Mr Desai said.

A number of patrons are also availing of the certificates facility in dollar and sterling. In either case, the scheme becomes operative from the day the deposit is made, Mr Desai said.

The NRE Rupee Certificate Scheme comprises documents of varying maturity, the face value in lieu of issue price depending on maturity periods. For instance, a Rs 1000-face value certificate can be had for Rs 278.20 per 10-year maturity; Rs 510.90 for 63 months; Rs 527.50 for 60 months; Rs 701.40 for 36 months; Rs 804.90 for 24 months; and Rs 906 for 12 months.

During 1983, 2,929 patrons bought certificates of the cumulative issue price of Rs 33.14 million for face value worth Rs 70.44 million. The figures compared favourably with those for 1982 (1,469 certificates; issue price Rs 16.28 million; face value Rs 29.65 million.)

The bank has done extremely well in channelling remittances to India through demand drafts. Mr Desai said figures are being worked out "but our share has been substantial, mainly because our branch network in India and overseas is the most exhaustive."

The bank's role in promoting equity/share issues of Indian companies has been commendable. With a separate Non-Resident Investment Cell in New Delhi, and guaranteed allotments forthcoming from promoters, investments in equity and projects can be correspondingly higher in the future and the bank can play an increasingly meaningful role, Mr Desai added.

FRENCH POSITION ON PALESTINIAN ISSUE DISCUSSED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 209, 11-17 Feb 84 pp 26-28

[Article by Jamal al-Rawi: "The Palestinians Are Waiting for a New French Initiative"]

[Text] Despite the optimism recently shown by the leaders of the PLO concerning the proximity of French diplomatic activity in support of the Palestinian cause, all the evidence indicates that the promised French initiative will not occur any time soon. Why? The following investigation answers this question.

Whenever the Palestinian resistance has passed through a difficult period, and especially since the siege of Beirut, its gaze has turned toward Paris in order to welcome a French diplomatic initiative in support of international recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people and their representation by the PLO.

During the siege of Beirut, France took this step in the form of a proposed resolution it submitted to the security council in cooperation with Egypt. However, the United States rejected the contents of this proposal, thereby causing Paris and Cairo not to present it for a vote. It was placed in the records of the security council in expectation of suitable circumstances.

More than a year has gone by since the siege of Beirut and Paris has taken no action. To be more precise, it has not implemented its continuing interest in saving the PLO by means of an international diplomatic initiative. Paris played a fundamental role in the process of evacuating the Palestinian fedayeen from Beirut and in convincing the Western countries to send a multinational force to protect the Palestinian camps after the massacres at Sabra and Shatila. It watched over the process of exchanging Palestinian and Israeli prisoners and protected the exodus of the Palestinian resistance from Tripoli. However, its commitment to the Palestinian cause did not extend to the point of working on a broad front to support the cause diplomatically.

Immediately after his departure from the siege of Tripoli, Yasir 'Arafat seemed to be betting to a large extent on the joint French-Egyptian proposed resolution. He said that he had dealt with this subject at length during

his meeting with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak. Then he wasted no time in announcing that "the only hope one can see in 1984 lies in what could be produced by joint French-Egyptian action in the international security council."

Why was this Palestinian bet made on France in particular? The reason lies in the fact that the French government, especially since the French socialists came to power in the spring of 1981, has shown unusual interest in the Palestinian issue. This interest has been made manifest via repeated intervention at the side of the PLO and a series of stands that the PLO has considered a unique step. This is especially true of France's recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to build an independent state. This recognition came after Francois Mitterand came to power. France's traditional position had been limited to recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to determine their destiny. As long as the PLO has no other alternative, France's position is better than those held by the other Western states. In the face of America's absolute refusal to recognize the PLO or hold a dialogue with it, the only possible wager can be made on the second Western state, France.

The French Demand

What does the PLO want from the French government?

The leadership of the PLO believes that the program approved by the Arab summit conference at Fez is the best that can be attained, and it has informed France of its complete readiness to commit itself to all of the program's clauses.

After Arab consensus was achieved on it, this program gained collective Palestinian agreement (at the recent Palestine National Council meeting). It then gained the agreement of the socialist group of countries, the non-aligned countries, the Afro-Asian group of countries, the African group of countries, and, finally, the Islamic group of countries (at the Fourth Islamic Summit, which was held recently in Casablanca).

To put the matter briefly, this is the first time in the history of the Palestinian issue that a peace plan has gained such a wide welcome. However, the last link in the chain is still lacking. It is the European group. The PLO believes that if Western Europe were to support the Fez program, this would mean both practically and psychologically that America's policy would be completely surrounded. It would be faced with a new fact, since a peace plan would exist that the entire world supported, with the exception of Washington and Tel Aviv. At that point, the American position would have to be moderated. Thus, many factors would change.

This is the Palestinian scenario. The importance of the French role can now be seen. Abu 'Ammar wants the French government to take the initiative by announcing its complete support for the Fez program and pushing the European countries to develop the declaration of Venice in this direction.

The Palestinian demand might seem at first glance an easy thing to achieve. The French government has already announced positions that are very close to the Fez program. Indeed, it welcomed the Arab consensus on the program. Thus, why should it not adopt the Fez program as its own program of action?

In reality, the Palestinian leaders have not been expecting any such important step. They know full well that President Mitterand is not ready to adopt the Fez program and submit it to Europe. This is not because he disagrees with its contents. Rather, it is because the important thing in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is not to take positions based on principle, but to look for a formula that can be applied immediately. This is Mitterand's true position. Thus, one can analyze his interest in the initiative of President Ronald Reagan. He considered it to be insufficient, but capable of being applied. This is what led him in the past, before coming to power, to support the Camp David accords, since he saw them as a realistic step, though they were not ideal.

The leadership of the PLO has understood the position of the French president and his eagerness to see the French initiative be the real key to peace in the region, not just a diplomatic position. Therefore, the Palestinian leadership has suggested a compromise solution that calls for the joint, French-Egyptian proposed resolution to be submitted to the security council as a European program. In the opinion of the leaders of the PLO, no serious contradiction exists between the Fez program and this proposal. What the first one says implicitly the second one says clearly.

Salah Khalaf recently explained the relationship between the expected French initiative and the Fez program. He said, "We think one can compare the program of the Fez summit to a train that has stopped, since the Western powers consider it unsuitable. Thus, it must be outfitted with a French locomotive, so that it can advance along the track leading to peace."

Thus, everything has been made ready for Paris to undertake an important action by developing the European position from the declaration of Venice toward the adoption of the proposed Egyptian-French resolution. Paris has signed both documents. It has been thought that France would at least try to convince her neighbors of her viewpoint. However, after having promised good things, Paris has not made its move.

France's Hesitation

Why is the French leadership hesitating to take this step? Why has it hesitated once again in recent days, thereby disappointing the hopes of the Palestinian leaders, who had seemed optimistic about the occurrence of "something" soon?

Domestically, the French government is passing through a very difficult period. It is facing growing criticism from the various sectors of the population, while no heralds of an improvement in the economic situation are appearing on the horizon. In such a domestic atmosphere, it is natural

for the government to hesitate to undertake such a step, because doing so would expose it to a violent political and media attack by the French right and the forces supporting Israel. These latter are found in all the French political parties, and they enjoy enormous influence over the media. In addition to that, deep contradictions exist within the French administration, whether on the level of the presidency, the Foreign Ministry, or the ruling Socialist Party, with regard to the Middle East.

In terms of foreign affairs, President Mitterand does not want to arouse the American leadership on a subject that is very sensitive with respect to President Reagan, since it might bring him down or make him successful in the coming American elections. Diplomatic activity within Europe on behalf of the French-Egyptian proposal would mean in practical terms that the Reagan plan had been rejected internationally. In addition to that, French diplomacy would face large difficulties in convincing some other European countries, especially Britain and West Germany, to accept the contents of the French-Egyptian proposal and the need for action by Europe to solve the Middle East crisis. This is especially true because some officials in London and Bonn are implicitly convinced by the analysis of the current American administration, according to which Soviet policy is the factor impeding the achievement of a solution in the Middle East. According to the American analysis, Reagan's proposed solution is the only realistic proposal that could be imposed on Israel. To put the matter briefly, President Mitterand is not able to undertake diplomatic activity that would arouse effective forces at home and the three most important capitals in the West, without obtaining "something," as he has expressed it.

The Ball Is in the Palestinian Court

What is this "something" Mitterand wants to obtain so that he can act? French officials have informed the leaders of the Palestinian resistance in recent weeks of the following: "The ball is in your court. We are ready to act and to accept internal and foreign diplomatic risks, but only with a firm document in our hands. This document is your official declaration of your readiness to recognize Israel at the opening of negotiations. At that point, we will confront everyone and say: 'You are obstructing peace if you refuse to affirm the contents of the French-Egyptian proposal.' At that point, we will be able to talk with the Americans from a position of strength, in order to convince them of the necessity to recognize you and conduct a dialogue with you. President Mitterand will be ready to meet Yasir 'Arafat whenever he wants, if he announces his recognition of Israel. This condition may seem unjust to you, but it must be fulfilled, given the current international diplomatic situation."

At the start of this week, we asked one of the counselors of Minister Claude Cheysson about this matter. He said, "Let the Palestinians agree on what they want first. We cannot explain to all the Western capitals the balances within the PLO. The Palestinian leaders constantly tell us at our meetings with them that they are ready to recognize Israel. This is how things are: they have signed the Fez program, supported the French-Egyptian proposal,

which recognizes Israel, drawn closer to Egypt, which recognizes Israel, and approved recognition of Israel in their national councils. Therefore, why can they not settle their internal affairs and announce their position publicly? If they did that, we would not lose one day. Rather, we would act immediately. We are currently optimistic, after the meeting between 'Arafat and Mubarak and the position taken by 'Arafat at the recent Islamic summit conference."

According to information available to us, it seems that the European capitals, including London and Bonn, have promised the French government that they will be ready to accept the contents of the French-Egyptian proposal if the PLO announces its recognition of Israel.

Will Abu 'Ammar fulfill this condition?

[Boxed insert, p 27]

The Proposed French-Egyptian Resolution

The proposed resolution presented by France and Egypt in concert to the Security Council on 29 July 1979 [as published], during the siege of Beirut, represents the basic foundation of the official position taken by the French government on the Palestinian issue.

This draft resolution consists of an introduction and four paragraphs. Paragraphs A and B have to do with the situation in Beirut and Lebanon in light of the Israeli invasion. A spokesman for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently told us that they would be deleted from the text if the resolution were submitted for a vote in the security council. As for paragraphs C and D, they are the most important ones. Their literal text follows:

1. (The Security Council) considers that the solution to the Lebanese problem must open the way for establishing a firm basis for the revitalization of peace and security in the region in the context of negotiations based on the principles of security for all states and justice for all peoples. These negotiations would specifically have as their goals the following:

a. The confirmation of the right of all the states in the region to exist and be secure, in accordance with security council resolution number 242;

b. The confirmation of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, with all that right implies. In order for this to be attained, the Palestinian people must be represented in the negotiations. This makes it necessary for the PLO to be allowed to take part in them.

c. Simultaneous and mutual recognition is requested from the concerned parties.

2. After consultation with the various concerned parties, including the Palestinian people, the secretary general hopes to submit to the security

council suggestions that will lead by peaceful means to the realization of the aforementioned goals, so that all may enjoy recognition, respect for their existence, and security.

(1) The secretary general hopes to inform the security council expeditiously and continuously, after a period of no more than (...), regarding the progress of the implementation of this resolution.

(2) All the member states desire to cooperate completely with the secretariat of the United Nations in order to implement this resolution.

12224

CSO: 4404/349

RELATIONS BETWEEN PLO, BAGHDAD DISCUSSED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 209, 11-17 Feb 84 pp 28-29

[Article by Muhammad Ma'tuq: "The Leader of the Palestinian Forces in Baghdad to AL-MAJALLAH: 'The Struggle With Israel Will Not End, and We Are Looking for New Forms of Combat'"]

[Text] Groups of Palestinian troops numbered among the forces evacuated from Tripoli last year have been arriving in Baghdad, in order to be stationed in a camp located about 60 kilometers from the Iraqi capital. The camp has been readied to receive 1,000 Palestinian fighters and their families. It is located in an off-limits military area in which Iraqi forces are stationed. Therefore, the arrival of journalists at the site has been postponed until further notice.

The troops began to arrive on Iraqi aircraft on 21 December. The news of their arrival was very prominently displayed in official media publications. It also took up prominent spaces on the front pages of the daily newspapers. A crowded popular reception was prepared for the first group. However, each time a new group arrives, those receiving it are led by Mr Na'im Haddad, a member of the pan-Arab leadership of the ruling Ba'th Party in Baghdad. He is also the head of the "Palestinian" office of the Arab Liberation Front in that leadership. He is accompanied by 'Isam al-Saffar, the head of the office of Arab liberation movements, which was established in 1981, and 'Azzam al-Ahmad, who has filled the post of director of the PLO office for 5 years.

The first group of Palestinian fighters was accompanied by a number of wounded persons, who were transferred to Iraqi hospitals. Palestinian sources in Iraq have noted that their wounds were not serious. As for the other wounded, they were taken from Tripoli on an Italian ship for treatment in a number of Arab and European countries.

The decision to accept Palestinian fighters in Iraq was made during the siege of Beirut in the summer of 1982 on the basis of a request by the head of the PLO, Yasir 'Arafat. The supreme authorities in Iraq agreed to offer hospitality to the al-Qadisiyah Brigade of the Palestine Liberation Army. 'Azzam al-Ahmad, whom AL-MAJALLAH met in his office in Baghdad, said that he himself carried the decision issued by President Saddam Husayn in which

he said he was ready to outfit the forces and provide them with everything they needed. Therefore, the Palestinian fighters did not take their weapons to Iraq. The Iraqi army will take over the responsibility for supplying them with the weapons, equipment, and ammunition they need. Al-Ahmad pointed out that the Palestinians' weapons are mainly from the east. This is also true of Iraqi weapons. It was decided that the Palestinian fighters in Tunisia and the Yemen Arab Republic, where the arms are western, would continue using eastern weapons, while depending on supplies from the Iraqi army.

After the Palestinians left Beirut, the decision to have Iraq host the al-Qadisiyah Brigade began to be executed. It was under the command of Abu Ta'an (Mustafa Khalil Diyab), who was previously a commander of the Armed Struggle. About 150 men arrived in Baghdad. However, the split that occurred in the Palestinian forces in the Biqa' forced the Palestinian leadership to halt implementation of the operation and summon the fighters to Lebanon. High-level Iraqi sources have confirmed to AL-MAJALLAH that contacts between the PLO and Baghdad were resumed during the siege of Tripoli. Baghdad informed 'Arafat that it was still ready to carry out the decision and that the arrangements for hosting the al-Qadisiyah Brigade had been completed. The Palestinian fighters began to return to Iraq, and they continued to do so until the full number had come (between 800 and 1,000 fighters). The forces are still called the al-Qadisiyah Brigade, but the brigade now belongs to the "Palestine National Liberation Army," which is what the forces of the Palestinian revolution have come to be called. The decision to set up this army was taken during the 16th session of the Palestine National Council, which was held in February 1983 in Algeria. According to the decision, the army contains the unified forces of the Palestinian revolution, including both the regular army (formerly the Palestine Liberation Front) and fighters from the various factions.

Aside from applying a new name to the Palestinian forces, very few arrangements have been made in order to set up the new army. Colonel Khalid Sultan is the leader of the Palestinian forces in Baghdad. He came in the first group of fighters. He said that the new army will follow a new military approach that is currently being discussed by the authorized Palestinian military institutions. Colonel Sultan is a member of the Supreme Military Council. From this position, he told AL-MAJALLAH that the new program would necessarily benefit from the previous combat experience collected by Palestinian fighters in the last 2 years, especially in the battles fought in the summer of 1982 against the Israeli invasion.

Colonel Sultan was responsible for various tasks in Lebanon. Most recently, during the invasion, he commanded the artillery and rockets of the Palestinian revolution and the Lebanese national movement. The operations he supervised began in al-Damur and moved back to Beirut. Colonel Sultan had this to say about that stage of his career: "For the first time, the enemy sustained greater losses in a confrontation with us than we did. We held firm with our modest capabilities for longer than could be expected." He spoke about al-Damur, saying, "The ratio between us and the enemy was 1 to

100. Nevertheless, the battles in al-Damur continued for 5 days, during which the enemy fought us from the air, sea, and land.

The Fighting in Tripoli

From the fighting in al-Damur, Khaldah, and Beirut, Colonel Sultan moved on to the fighting in Tripoli and its suburbs. He said, "The things our camps at al-Badawi and al-Barid and our concentrations in Tripoli were exposed to cannot be imagined and could not be anticipated. We had never seen the like of the thousands of rockets and bombs that descended on our houses and took the lives of the innocent, nor even a portion of them on a similar occasion" (during the invasion of Beirut).

He spoke about the way the Israelis took part in the siege from the sea, saying that this confrontation made clear who was the real enemy. He added: "Luck played its role in the small number of hits in the ranks of our fighters. Often it happened that a position we had abandoned a few minutes before would be exposed to bombardment that could have caused awful disasters."

Then came the transfer to Iraq. Colonel Sultan said that the struggle with the enemy has not stopped and will not cease. He added that new forms of combat would be worked out as part of the new program that is being discussed. Colonel Sultan went on to say, "We believe in the pan-Arab character of the battle, and we consider the first positive aspect of our military presence to be the continuation of the link between the Palestinian issue and the pan-Arab character of the battle." On this basis, the move to Iraq was made. Iraq has the same slogan. The colonel said that Iraqi officials affirmed to the Palestinian leadership that "The door is wide open militarily. We will work very hard to benefit from that." Colonel Sultan also stated that the Palestinian forces in Iraq would be treated "like any unit in the Iraqi army." He went on to say, "We have been assured that nothing will stand in the way of our requests for the restoration of the fighting ability of our forces." He concluded by saying, "We have felt since we arrived that we are among our people and relatives and in the midst of our army."

In the opinion of Colonel Sultan, the pan-Arab character of the battle cannot be effective without Egypt. In his opinion, it is the "primary military support of the Arab world. Now we are seeing some signs that the Camp David treaty is frozen or on its way to disappearing. The autonomy talks have stopped. We have all heard, as President Husni Mubarak has said, that the return of the Egyptian ambassador to Israel must be approved by a popular plebiscite. Moreover, the normalization process has been paralyzed since the beginning." On this basis, the commander of the Palestinian forces in Baghdad said that the reverberation of the visit made by 'Arafat to Cairo "was 100 percent positive in the spirits of the fighters." He listed various reasons for that, including the fact that the troops were around 'Arafat as he moved from place to place on the front lines, fighting next to them like one of them. In addition, he mentioned "the trust they feel for the commander as a person. He will never abandon the basic rights for which thousands of those who have been killed, wounded, and imprisoned have striven."

Iraq's Welcome

The principle of Palestinian-Iraqi concord is being reinforced by the similar positions taken by the two sides vis-a-vis alignments or existing Arab alignment plans. The Iraqi media have provided the incoming Palestinian fighters with ample opportunity to express their rage at the Arab support given to the rebels and talk about the "plot" to expel them from Lebanon. Moreover, 'Arafat's meeting with Mubarak was one of the most prominent news stories published on the front pages of Iraqi newspapers like AL-THAWRAH, AL-JUMHURIYAH, and the BAGHDAD OBSERVER. These newspapers talked about the "official and popular reception" given the Palestinian leader in Egypt without mentioning at all that 'Arafat's visit to Cairo last month was his first since 1977.

In reality, Iraq has taken large steps in order to strengthen its ties to Egypt. Iraqi officials consider this to be an application of the resolutions of the Fez summit with respect to relations with Egypt. Only 2 weeks ago, an Egyptian agricultural delegation led by Mukhtar 'Abd-al-Hamid, the president of the Egyptian Federation of Agricultural Workers, visited Baghdad, met with President Saddam Husayn, gave him a letter from President Mubarak, and delivered the greetings of the Iraqi president to Mubarak on returning. It has been officially announced that the delegation and the Iraqi government signed an agreement to send still more Egyptian workers to Iraq. It is estimated that there are now about 1 million Egyptians residing in Iraq. Some are fixed, while others are mobile. The editor of one of the Iraqi newspapers told AL-MAJALLAH that the Iraqi press intentionally addressed these large numbers of persons by publishing the news of Egypt. The Egyptian workers are part of the mass of readers in Iraq. However, this official, who attends the sessions of the cabinet in order to get a picture of the internal, Arab, and international situation, affirmed that there was still a difference between meeting with Egypt and Iraq's negative position on Camp David.

'Azzam al-Ahmad thinks that Iraq is the most important geographical point for the Palestinian presence in the aftermath of the departure from Lebanon. We referred to statements recently made by 'Arafat on the subject of the intention to establish a "confederal army with Jordan." This would require the stationing of Palestinian forces on Jordanian territory. In response, al-Ahmad said that this depended on the results of the contacts with Jordan. Palestinian military sources in Baghdad said that 'Arafat's remarks amounted to anticipating the results of talks that have not ended yet. These sources confirmed that the discussion in progress on a new program for the Palestine National Liberation Army was not now taking this matter into account.

There has been a PLO office in Baghdad since the organization was founded. However, its activities were frozen between 1974 and 1978, after Muhammad Sabri al-Banna (Abu Nidal), who was then director of the office, split away from the PLO. Matters returned to their normal state after the Arab summit held in Baghdad. To be precise, this happened in January 1979, when the office was once again recognized and its members were granted diplomatic

status, like any other diplomatic delegation. Al-Ahmad related that since 1979 Abu Nidal's role has been "confined" in Iraq. At that time, his control over Palestinian radio broadcasting was broken. Iraqi government supervision was initially imposed on it. After the exodus from Beirut, a special Palestinian broadcast facility for the PLO was opened in Baghdad. This was preceded, in 1981, by the liquidation of Abu Nidal's influence in the "unified media." The PLO's news report was once again issued daily by the Palestinian News Agency (WAFA). As for FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH, the central newspaper of the PLO, the PLO office itself recommended that it should not be sent to Iraq, because of the positions on the Iran-Iraq War it contained.

Abu Nidal's office was closed 2 months ago. However, 'Azzam al-Ahmad maintained that this measure was not taken in coordination with him. Rather, he was informed of it like anyone else. Al-Ahmad said Abu Nidal was not in Iraq when the measure was taken. The office was shut down without delay. However, the Iraqi government gave those working in it sufficient time to depart. This time has still not run out for the families of some of the former workers. Before the Palestinian forces came, the PLO office was tied to the office of Arab liberation movements and the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Now the Iraqi Ministry of Defense has entered the picture. AL-MAJALLAH has learned that a discussion is in progress to work out a new formula for cooperation between the PLO office and the concerned Iraqi institutions. However, all the Palestinian officials expect positive results.

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CSO: 4404/349

HEAD OF PALESTINIAN ECONOMIC INSTITUTION INTERVIEWED

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 44, 11 Feb 84 pp 62, 63

[Interview with Dr Samir Ayyub, the general director of Samid, by AL-TADAMUN: "The Core of the Public Sector Has Preceded the Creation of the State"; date and place not specified]

[Text] Samid is the name of a Palestinian economic institution founded in the diaspora that is trying to provide basic services to Palestinians living outside the occupied territories. It started out as a social institution at the beginning of 1969, when its purpose was to offer training and instruction to the sons of martyrs. However, its activity developed and diversified. It now offers its services to broad sectors of Palestinian youth in numerous Arab and non-Arab countries. AL-TADAMUN met with Dr Samir Ayyub, the general director of this institution, and conducted the following interview with him about the characteristics of this experiment.

[Question] Can we talk about the goals of the institution?

[Answer] The institution of Samid takes upon its shoulders the task of training and preparing Palestinian cadres. One can say that it is creating the core of a Palestinian public sector. It is a Palestinian economic experiment in exile that aims to contribute to the achievement of material independence and self-sufficiency.

[Question] Can we say that Samid has come close to achieving its goals?

[Answer] If we look at the true state of the institution's activity, we have to confirm that it has achieved a large portion of its goals, although it still has not fully realized its ambitions, for its aspirations are not modest. Therefore, we are struggling with our fate and confronting difficulties with an enterprising spirit, so that Samid will achieve its goals.

[Question] What are the sources of financing for the institution's projects?

[Answer] Most financing comes from the Fatah movement, though a complementary role is played by the economic income generated by production in our institutions. We also get aid from our brothers and friends, and financial facilitations are granted to the institution and its facilities.

[Question] One can say that the natural way to achieve the goals of the institution of Samid is to set up more projects that are consistent with the general framework of the institution's activities and capabilities. What are the most important projects being run by Samid? In particular, what about the productive projects?

[Answer] Samid has tried to express its goals within the context of numerous industrial, agricultural, and service-oriented projects. It has a group of factories located in several Arab and friendly countries. We have focused on manufacturing foodstuffs and goods and products made from leather, wood, and cloth. These have included shoes, furniture, and carpets. Samid also owns many agricultural projects in some Arab and African countries such as the Yemen Arab Republic, Somalia, the Sudan, and Syria, not to mention its agricultural projects in Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Madagascar, and Senegal. The institution runs pineapple and vegetable farms. On 20 November 1983, Samid signed a joint economic agreement with Angola. Samid also owns large cattle ranches.

In addition to that, the institution is setting up complete service projects, such as intermediate institutes for training cadres and a center for studies of economic and social benefit.

[Question] What is your evaluation of the character and magnitude of Samid's relations with concerned economic institutions, including commercial institutions, in the brother Arab lands and friendly countries?

[Answer] First of all, I must confirm that the development of events in Lebanon, with their effect on the Palestinian situation, including the Samid projects, have had a negative effect on the institution's ability to distribute its products, in terms of both quantity and quality, despite the fact that we are achieving important successes on the level of reinforcing economic and commercial cooperation with the brotherly and friendly countries. These achievements, in turn, contribute to the process of building the foundation of the institution's future success. We have been granted a series of facilitations and have concluded many economic agreements. The most recent one was an agreement signed on 21 October with Hungary. This is the first agreement of its kind to be signed by a socialist state and a national liberation movement.

In addition to that, Samid owns 17 trade centers spread through our brother Arab countries and the friendly countries. Our commercial centers are active in the vast majority of brother countries, just as the Arab and foreign commercial centers are. However, we want our brothers to take better care of our centers by granting them some positive exceptions. They should not be treated like state-owned centers. We do not live in the land of Palestine. Our separation from our country deprives us of the ability to compete justly with other trade centers.

[Question] How do you evaluate the effects of the Zionist invasion of Lebanon on Samid, both in administrative terms and in terms of its production facilities?

[Answer] After the Zionist invasion, the general administration of Samid moved to Jordan, which is where Abu 'Ala' , the president of the institution and of Samid's central agencies, resides. All the operations of the institution's regionally distributed branches are also administered there.

Naturally, after the invasion, the institution's branches and facilities in Lebanon began to suffer more than others from problems and difficulties having to do with running their operations and exporting the products and goods made by their projects located on Lebanese territory. This was due to a number of causes. Perhaps one of the most prominent was the phenomenon of economic stagnation in Lebanon, which affected industry, agriculture, and commerce. This phenomenon produced widespread unemployment in the Lebanese and Palestinian work forces. This was especially true in the field of construction. In addition, a number of Samid's Lebanese factories were destroyed. Their value amounted to 86 million Lebanese pounds.

For these two reasons, not to mention other factors, Samid was the first and last refuge for Palestinian workers looking for employment opportunities in order to stave off hunger. Therefore, its production centers absorbed far larger numbers of these workers than they really needed.

As for exports, they were inevitably affected by the security situation, as you know. Whether by air, sea, or land, Samid could not get its products to consumers in the Arab nation. We hope that tranquility and peace will come to Lebanon and solve some of these difficulties, thereby enabling us to be faithful to the institution's goals vis-a-vis our people, who are suffering from difficult circumstances.

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KHALID AL-HASAN INTERVIEWED ON MILITARY OPTION, OTHER ISSUES

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 46, 25 Feb 84 pp 23, 24

[Interview with Khalid al-Hasan, member of the central committee of the Fatah movement, by Rashid Khashanah: "There Are No Conditions For Re-Establishing Normal Relations With Syria"; date and place not specified]

[Text] This interview with Khalid al-Hasan, a member of the central committee of the Fatah movement, was conducted before the Arab region witnessed a series of important developments, such as the acceptance by President Amin al-Jumayyil of the eight-point agreement, the meeting of President Husni Mubarak and King Husayn in Washington, and their meeting with President Reagan. Nevertheless, this interview with a founder of Fatah and a Palestinian decisionmaker raises important issues, since Khalid al-Hasan clarified the situation with regard to the military option and the political struggle, as well as explaining what will happen if the Palestine National Council (PNC) is not convened and what must be done for relations between Syria and the Fatah movement to be restored.

[Question] At the recent meeting of the revolutionary council of the Fatah movement, the movement tried to draw up a plan of action for the next stage. Is it possible for us to learn some of the main features of this plan?

[Answer] It was not the task of the revolutionary council to draw up a plan of action for the next stage. Rather, it wanted to review the events that occurred before Abu 'Ammar's visit to Cairo and the events in Tripoli. The meetings were an evaluation of the past stage. The decisions issued by the revolutionary council have been announced. It has been noted that the most important thing in them is the preparation for holding a conference of the movement in order to reaffirm the foundations on which it grew in light of the new situation. Moreover, the revolutionary council discussed the subject of convening the PNC in coordination with the concerned parties.

[Question] Before the revolutionary council met, an important meeting of the central committee was held. It lasted about 5 days, as a result of a disagreement concerning the evaluation of Mr Yasir 'Arafat's visit to Cairo, or so it seems. It is said in this regard that the members of the committee were divided. One group considered the visit a political violation, while the other considered it merely an organizational violation. How was the

dispute resolved? In what spirit was the difference in the points of view of the central committee's members overcome?

[Answer] First of all, the meeting did not last 5 days. Rather, it lasted 2 days, with the meeting of the organization's executive committee intervening. Second of all, there was no disagreement within the central committee. No matter what results the visit produced, there was an organizational violation. The political intellect--or political understanding--cannot constantly think about the past. Therefore, we had to consider both the positive and the negative results of this visit, as well as the question of how to strengthen the positive aspects and put a stop to the negative ones. The statement issued by the central committee meeting was absolutely clear. It contained everything that was discussed by Abu 'Ammar and President Husni Mubarak. Thus, it seems that their conversation was a simple statement of points of view. Abu 'Ammar asked Egypt to adopt the position of the PLO, not the reverse. The subject ended with the statement that was issued. No leader can be paralyzed. He has to take initiatives. However, some initiatives cannot be allowed to pass without consultation. This is what happened with respect to Abu 'Ammar's initiative. There had to be consultation, and the decisions of the central committee had to be issued.

[Question] Following the meeting of the central committee and the decisions the committee issued--especially the internal decision--it seems that the committee's work has a new style. Every initiative or dialogue undertaken by Abu 'Ammar has to be discussed by a meeting of the central committee, and the decisions made will be collective. It is now being said that before Abu 'Ammar goes to Jordan, he will return to Tunis and the central committee will meet.

[Answer] We in Fatah have no president or general secretary. Rather, we have a central committee that represents collective leadership. Consequently, this is the method that has been used since Fatah came into existence. There is nothing new about it, since we have been using it from the start. Everything is discussed and decided in the central committee. However, someone might find himself in a distant place. He might be forced to take a certain step. He would take it and then come to the central committee to have it discussed and evaluated. The committee can either affirm what he did or not.

[Question] You recently said, "If the PNC is not convened, we will be forced to organize a broad-based popular conference, as happened when the PLO was set up." This means that there would be two national councils and two PLOs at the same time. Do you not think that this would take away from the PLO its most valuable card, Palestinian national unity and the unified character of its representation of the Palestinian people?

[Answer] The opposite is true, the complete opposite, for "if the meeting of the national council is not called," this will mean that this national council has no legitimacy, due to reasons outside of the council itself. The organization cannot survive without a council, that is, without representatives of the Palestinian people. Consequently, if no council

can meet, we must go back to the basics, to the people. When a popular conference is called and elects its representatives to a national council, we will have returned matters to their beginning. However, such an operation can only take place in a situation of dire necessity. As for national unity, I personally understand it to mean the unity of the people around a goal and a group of leaders. We have this, and there is no problem in this regard at all, as recent events have shown. We are working for the sake of building a coalition of organizations inside the national council. I am referring to the organizations that did not bear arms against the camps. Together with these organizations, we will try as hard as we can to see that the coalition survives. If that fails, we will have to turn to the people. I believe that the council will be convened.

[Question] It is well known that the purpose of the Palestinian-Jordanian dialogue is to discuss the means of saving whatever Palestinian land can be saved and wrested from the grip of settlement. However, America and Israel refuse to speak with the PLO. They are obstinate about this. What formula do you expect will be used to undertake joint Palestinian-Jordanian activity in the coming stage?

[Answer] The dialogue is being conducted in order to organize the bilateral relationship between ourselves and Jordan, on the basis of the final goal of a confederation of two independent states. This is the dialogue going on with Jordan. As for America's recognition of the PLO, that is an American affair. However, no one can achieve peace without the PLO, because the issue is that of the Palestinian people. If Arab solidarity is effectively realized, and if the Arabs' means of applying pressure are really used in the context of cooperating with America on the subject of the Palestinian issue, then the day will have to come when America recognizes the PLO.

[Question] At a recent meeting of the supreme military council of the Palestinian revolution, each group presented a definite conception and a precise plan for reorganizing the forces of the revolution. Will the military card play a role in the coming stage, or will the PLO give priority to the political struggle?

[Answer] Many people are asking about working priorities. Is priority to be given to the military struggle or to the political struggle? It seems to me that this kind of thinking is mistaken insofar as the Palestinian revolution is concerned, for as long as there is an occupation, there must be armed struggle resisting that occupation. The relationship between the political struggle and the armed struggle is organic. No revolution undertaken to liberate land from occupation can differentiate between political activity and military activity. The process is not one of priorities. Rather, it has to do with the way in which political and military activity affect each other. Each affects the other in the interest of the cause. However, there are two kinds of Palestinian military activity:

Palestinian military activity within the framework of Arab military activity is the first kind. This does not exist under the current circumstances, because in the current Arab situation, the military option has almost been

eliminated as a result of divisiveness and worsening disputes. In this climate of disputes, disunity, division, and confusion, no Arab military activity can take place. Consequently, Palestinian military activity that is a part of Arab military activity does not exist right now.

The other kind is Palestinian military activity that resists the occupation in the interior. This is a legal right. It can only stop after the occupation ends.

[Question] In statements dealing with the next Fatah conference, you have said that the supporters of the rebels must be given an opportunity to renew their membership, and that they must be given some time. These statements make one hope that reconciliation with some supporters of the rebels may be achieved. Are practical efforts being made in this direction?

[Answer] Practical efforts in this direction have not been started. However, we in Fatah have taken the position that we are neither a terrorist movement nor a movement that cooperates with those who quarrel with it with weapons. We are a democratic movement and we believe in democratic dialogue. The rebels are divided into two groups. The first group consciously led the operation. Thus, it conspired against the movement. Their way of seeing things caused them to attack our camps. One can have no reconciliation with people such as these. As for the other rebels, they were misled and convinced by certain slogans in a certain situation, after the conditions of the departure from Lebanon. These people are always given the opportunity to return to the movement within a certain period. Of course, a precise examination will be necessary, because I do not think that anyone who opened fire on our people in the camps could be readmitted to the movement.

[Question] It has been said with near certainty that the next Fatah conference will consider reforms in the movement's internal system. In what direction will these reforms proceed? What organizational lessons has the Fatah movement learned from the crisis it recently passed through?

[Answer] Man is part of the process of history. Consequently, he is part of the process of development. Development is always realized by reviewing past events, actions, and achievements, and by enumerating the problems that resulted from them and the mistakes that were made. Then these problems are solved and the mistakes are dealt with. It is this solution that produces development. Without applying this critical review, man cannot continue. Very great events happened in Lebanon and Tripoli. Our course of action in the past was very complex. It contained many crises and wars. All that produces lessons from which we must benefit in rebuilding the institutions of the movement and the systems that govern its internal relations. We must do this by understanding the problems we have faced and their causes. Thus, the reforms that might be made in the internal system will be linked to the program we agree on for rebuilding the institutions.

[Question] There is increasing talk about Jordan and Egypt cooperating in the future in order to support peace efforts in the region. What is the PLO's stand on this matter?

[Answer] I personally know of no coordination between Jordan and Egypt.

[Question] But Mr 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah recently visited Cairo in this context.

[Answer] But this is not coordination. Whatever the case may be, I do not know. What I do know is that Egyptian attempts are being made with Europe, especially with France, with the aim of convincing the Europeans to adopt a position consistent with that of the PLO, in order to apply pressure on the United States. Jordan is also making direct contacts and attempts with Europe in the same direction.

[Question] Some think that the dialogue being resumed by Egypt and Jordan aims at forming an anti-Syrian axis. How do you respond to this analysis?

[Answer] We are against axes. No matter what actions the countries take, axes mean more Arab divisiveness to us. Arab divisiveness means an inability to apply strong pressure for the Palestinian cause internationally, and this does damage to the Palestinian interest.

[Question] Arab circles expect a limited American or Israeli blow to be struck against Syria, especially after the meeting held by an American-Israeli committee in Washington to discuss the undertaking of joint exercises in order to confront what the committee called "the increase in Soviet activity in Syria." Do you share these expectations? What should the Arabs, and in particular the PLO, do if this confrontation occurs?

[Answer] Israel will not strike a blow at Syria unless America wants it to. Now there is a Syrian-American dialogue. There is also an American desire, which was expressed by President Reagan when he announced his readiness to meet with President al-Asad. In addition, the American envoy Rumsfeld is making more visits to the region, especially Damascus. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is trying to solve the Lebanese problem. In light of all these things, I believe that America will not allow Israel to strike Syria in this stage. To sum things up, we must understand that Israeli military activity does not take place without a green light from America.

[Question] But might not the failure of the dialogue between Shultz and Gromyko in Stockholm have an effect on the region?

[Answer] It will have effect on the world level, not merely on the level of the region, because the Soviet Union and America are great powers. Every escalation of the confrontation between them is reflected in their zones of influence in the world and affects both their interests and those of their allies. Thus, we have always supported international detente, because it enables events to move toward a better situation. Therefore, there is no doubt that the failure that occurred in this meeting was regrettable. It seems to me that these matters are related to the American elections, which tend to magnify the Soviet danger in the region of the Middle East in order to justify American political positions in the region. We hope that the two great powers will reach some kind of reconciliation, because that will be in the interest of the Palestinian struggle.

[Question] It is said that President Reagan sent a verbal message to Abu 'Ammar during the siege of Tripoli informing him that he would not allow the Israelis to attack the fighters departing from Tripoli. Are the Americans beginning to come to these senses?

[Answer] No message was sent, and this report is incorrect.

[Question] Neither an oral nor a written message was sent?

[Answer] Neither an oral nor a written message.

[Question] Under what conditions can the alliance between the PLO and Syria be restored, especially since the two parties were linked at one time by a strategic alliance that was reached after they confronted each other in 1976?

[Answer] We must reestablish normal relations between Syria and Fatah and between Syria and the PLO for more than one reason. Let me mention the geopolitical reason, that is, the political reasons arising from the geographical situation. Therefore, we are eager to reestablish normal relations with Syria. I hope this will happen as quickly as possible. As for the conditions, let me say this: There are no conditions in normal relations. By normal relations we mean usual relations based on balanced cooperation, consensus, respect for Arab legality, as represented in the resolutions of the summits, and respect for Palestinian legality, as represented by the resolutions of the PNC.

[Question] At the last meeting of the supreme military council, it was decided that a delegation from the council would go to Moscow to discuss the potential for being supplied with Soviet arms. What does the organization expect from the Soviets on this level?

[Answer] This is nothing new. These are constant and normal relationships. Talks are always going on between us and the Soviets.

[Question] Are you optimistic about the next stage?

[Answer] A struggler can only be optimistic, for otherwise he will stop struggling. The struggle of the peoples is always one of the weak against the strong. What makes the weak struggle against the strong--especially if the stronger party is a great power--is his strong faith in his cause and the complete hope born of this faith. He believes in the inevitability of victory because the cause for which he struggles is just.

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EDITORIAL SCORES U. S. AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 14 Feb 84 p 2

[Editorial: "Uncle Sam's Voices"]

[Text]

To judge by US Ambassador Harry Barnes's latest speech in Delhi, Uncle Sam, it seems, has decided that India cannot have even the verbal sweet-nothings she has on occasion received from America in lieu of the weapons given to Pakistan. While US policy has built up Pakistan over 30 years to be India's arch-adversary, this country has had from the USA progressively little, aside from some sentimental mash about the common bonds of India and America as sister-democracies. After Bangladesh gained independence and Pakistan was decisively beaten by India in 1971 the US Government took at least three years before acknowledging the fact that Pakistan could not be the dominant military power in south-west Asia. It was in 1974 that Dr Henry Kissinger, the US Secretary of State, decided to give India a verbal solatium, calling her, with some reluctance and distaste, the dominant regional power. The phrase caught on and some American journalists and officials repeated the description at intervals to calm Indian fears about the hurt being caused to this country's interests by American actions in south Asia. Pakistan, in per capita terms, was given four times the concessional assistance which India received and the Pakistani military was equipped with the best weapon systems at any point of time. What did it matter, so ran the American argument, since India was the dominant regional power?

Mr Barnes has now decided to take India down a notch or so and deny her the verbal lollipop. India, the American Ambassador in Delhi has discovered, is an important power in south Asia (but not the dominant regional power). It does not of course matter one way or the other if Mr Barnes calls India a dominant regional power or merely an important country in this region. This country's future will be decided in this country and not by what appellations US officials choose to attach to India. A nation's strength is determined by its own resources, material and human, and its own internal unity and cohesion, and not by the labels foreign diplomats pin on it. True, a less reactionary US administration than the present one could have helped India's development. But this country can take in its stride a further diminution of American assistance which has been already reduced to a trickle.

But words are important as reflecting policy nuances. Mr Barnes's description of India has to be compared with the heavy stress being laid by the Reagan administration lately on Pakistan as the key element in south and south-west Asia. If the words being chosen to describe India and Pakistan point to a heavy tilt in US policy against India then this country will watch with foreboding the future unfolding of that policy. US involvement in south Asia is mounting. It is wrong to be complacent and assume that this involvement will not become interventionist. If official American pronouncements downgrade India, Pakistan's bloated military establishment may take them for a green signal favouring a more offensive stance against this country. That will precipitate a new crisis in south Asia.

CSO: 4600/1596

FORMER U. S. ENVOY SAYS PAKISTAN AID NO THREAT TO INDIA

Madras THE HINDU in English 16 Feb 84 p 7

[Text] Madras, Feb. 15. Mr. Robert Neumann, former U. S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Morocco and Saudi Arabia, told THE HINDU yesterday that until the middle of next year there would or could be no meaningful negotiations for a final and full settlement of the West Asia problem.

Currently a consultant to the Centre for Strategic Studies in the Goerge Town University (Washington), Mr. Neumann thinks serious negotiations are ~~not~~ possible as long as the present set of people govern in Tel Aviv. The Labour Alliance would have a chance to get elected at the next poll in Israel and their election should make a lot of difference. King Hussain of Jordan and Mr. Yasser Arafat of the PLO had moved a little closer to a negotiating position and this was a welcome development. Also, by next year, new governments would be in office in Washington and Moscow. (He considered the installation of Mr. Cherenkov as Communist Party Secretary only an interim arrangement).

Mr. Neumann thought the Arab nations had become more realistic. They found some advantage in Egypt, now re-admitted to the mainline Arab nations, retaining its links with Israel. In his view, the Arabs did not object to America's good relations with Israel; what they demanded was that the Americans be more evenhanded. "Arab leaders have privately told me this," he observed.

Syria which has managed to carve out a pre-eminent position in the area had long been isolated and this isolation drove it to Moscow. "What that country wants to do with its pre-eminence, nobody knows." Egypt together with Saudi Arabia might come together against Syria and that could drive that country still closer to Moscow, he feared.

Mr. Neumann who has had a distinguished career as teacher, author and diplomat answered a number of questions on Afghanistan, U. S. supply of arms to Pakistan and balancing of strategic interests of the free world with human rights.

He did not think that the Soviet Union could ever consolidate its hold in Afghanistan. He was aware that the Soviet occupation forces were sustaining heavy losses in men and material fighting the rebels. He did not agree that the U. S. assistance to Pakistan did not reach the freedom fighters of Afghanistan.

Besides the U. S., Egypt, Saudi Arabia and even China were helping them, obviously through Pakistan. The Indian attitude to the invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet troops, he said, was, to say the least, very strange and in marked contrast to that of most countries of the world.

Mr. Neumann did not agree that the U. S. military and other assistance to Pakistan facing three million refugees on its borders with Afghanistan posed a threat to India. "The Indian fear is very exaggerated," he remarked. India was very much stronger than Pakistan with massive arms assistance from the Soviet Union. The U. S. had good relations with India. Pakistan with its geographical position at the head of the Arabian Sea and as neighbour to Afghanistan was the ideal choice to base the military hardware to secure the U. S. strategic objective. Not having opposed the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union at the time it occurred, it was strange that India should characterise the U. S. steps to help the beleaguered Afghans and potential victims of Soviet attack as something calculated to create a threat to India's security.

As for the complaint that the U. S. invariably rushed to the help of authoritarian regimes against real or imaginary threat, not caring what happens to human rights inside the nations, Mr. Neumann said it was not for India to voice that complaint. "I have not known a regime more authoritarian, more brutal than the Soviet Union and is not that country a close friend of India?" Why would you say that we are encouraging authoritarianism when we just try to save our strategic interests" he asked. "We cannot possibly think of interfering in the internal affairs of many countries to set up democratic regimes there," he added.

Mr. Neumann at the outset made it clear that he was not speaking as the spokesman of his Government or any other agency.

CSO: 4600/1604

ANALYST DISCUSSED GANDHI ATTENDANCE AT ANDROPOV RITES

Madras THE HINDU in English 14 Feb 84 p 1

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, Feb. 13.

The Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, left for Moscow this evening by a special plane to attend the funeral of the Soviet leader, Yuri Andropov, and meet his successor, Mr. Konstantin Chernenko, before returning to Delhi on Wednesday morning, according to current arrangements.

(An AFP report from Moscow says Mrs. Gandhi arrived in the Soviet capital today).

Mrs. Gandhi was to leave early in the afternoon to reach Moscow in time for placing a wreath on Andropov's coffin in the Hall of Columns tonight itself, if possible, but she left later since the wreath-laying ceremony by foreign heads of State and Government had been fixed for tomorrow morning before the start of the funeral procession to the Red Square.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by the External Affairs Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, her foreign affairs adviser, Mr. G. Parthasarathy, the Foreign Secretary, Mr. M. K. Rasgotra, the Joint Secretary in her Secretariat, Mr. C. R. Garekhan, and her special assistant, Mr. R. K. Dhavan.

The choice of Mr. Chernenko to succeed Andropov did not come as a surprise since it had been expected following his selection as head of the funeral commission. But Kremlin watchers in Delhi did not think that the Soviet leaders would take three days to take this decision since the successor had been named almost within a day on previous occasions.

Mrs. Gandhi will be meeting him for the first time, although she had shaken hands with him at Brezhnev's reception when she paid her last official visit to Moscow in September 1982. But she had met Andropov also for the first time when she went to Moscow for Brezhnev's funeral two months later, since he was away from Moscow during her official visit.

The point that is being stressed here is that the continuity and closeness that mark Indo-Soviet relations do not depend unduly on

personality factors since almost all the Soviet leaders, from Khrushchev's days have more or less followed the same policy of friendship and cooperation. However, the new Soviet leaders, including Andropov and Mr. Chernenko, have

had hardly any personal contact with India, although as members of the politburo in Brezhnev's time they had been closely associated with his policy of establishing a special relationship with India.

The Prime Minister will avail herself of the first opportunity to extend Mr. Chernenko an invitation to visit India, just as she did when she met Andropov for the first time at the time of Brezhnev's funeral in November, 1982. Andropov would have come to India this winter had he been well enough to pay the visit and his death came in the way of the trip that the Soviet Defence Minister, Mr. Dimitri Ustinov, was planning to make to deputise for him.

There is nobody of any consequence in the Government of India who had met Mr. Chernenko and talked to him, although Indian diplomats in Moscow had seen him along with the other top Soviet leaders atop the Lenin mausoleum on ceremonial occasions. He is reputed to be a skilled organiser, a strong party functionary and an old timer with an unblemished reputation.

Mr. Chernenko emerged as the second most important personality in the Kremlin hierarchy in the last years of Brezhnev and was widely reckoned to be his chosen successor when the time came for it. But Andropov managed to marshal more support and emerge as the top man after Brezhnev's death, leading to widespread speculation that he might be edged out altogether in due course.

As some experts on Soviet affairs see it, Mr. Chernenko's ascendancy now represents a return to the Brezhnev era, in the sense that his most important protege who was bypassed only 15 months ago has managed to emerge at the top to inherit his mantle.

Mrs. Gandhi was the first foreign dignitary to inform the Soviet Government that she would

be attending Andropov's funeral, which was done almost within an hour of the official announcement of his death in Moscow on Friday afternoon. As such, she is expected to be the first to be shown the courtesy of a private meeting with Mr. Chernenko after the burial ceremony which is followed by the customary reception to foreign leaders in the Kremlin.

CSO: 4600/1598

POLISH JOURNALISTS INTERVIEW WITH GANDHI REPORTED

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 16 Feb 84 p 8

[Text] New Delhi, February 15 (UNI). Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has said that India was in touch with countries reportedly helping Pakistan in the manufacture of the atom bomb, since it would materially affect the security of this country.

In an interview to two Polish journalists, she said India still believed that the greatest danger was of a conventional war but it could not be concerned about Pakistan acquiring such a capability.

Mrs. Gandhi said if Pakistan made an atom bomb, it would have a bad effect on India as a whole.

Asked about the problems faced by India, she said her government's efforts were aimed at strengthening national integrity and safeguarding the country from possible challenges "from outside and inside".

Stating that India had been attacked five times since it became free 35 years ago, she said. "There are constant efforts to encourage agitational groups from within."

Replying to another question about installation of missiles by the United States in Western Europe, Mrs. Gandhi said this had increased tensions and made it more difficult for leaders to meet and talk on limitation of nuclear arms.

In this context, she said the non-aligned movement could only continue its efforts to try and bring the powers together to talk.

Mrs. Gandhi stressed that the basic responsibility for world peace rested on the militarily strong nations, especially those having nuclear weapons. At the same time, other nations also had a role to play, however weak or small they might be.

She referred to the summit meeting convened by her in New York last year and said that she had written to all heads of state about its outcome.

She said she had sought their cooperation in bringing about an early dialogue on nuclear disarmament as well as North-South issues. She had not heard from all the leaders but those who had responded were agreed on the need for further dialogue. "World peace demands a North-South dialogue no less than an East-West dialogue," she observed.

CSO: 4600/1602

COMPROMISE REACHED ON WORLD BANK RANKING

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 16 Feb 84 p 1

[Article by J. N. Parimoo]

[Text] Washington, February 15. A compromise on India's ranking in the World Bank has been reached, it is learnt. According to the formula, India will occupy the eighth place trailing immediately behind Saudi Arabia and China, which will have the seventh and sixth places, respectively.

India will now get three per cent of the total shares, and not 2.9 per cent as had been proposed under the earlier arrangement which India opposed, threatening to use the right of pre-emption.

The compromise has to be formally approved by the governments concerned. A draft of it has been sent to New Delhi for approval. A meeting of the board of directors is expected to be held before the end of this month to formalise the new arrangement.

Retains Right

Though the new formula downgrades India from the seventh to the eighth position, an Indian official source said: "This is the best we could perhaps get under the present circumstances."

The net gain for India under the new arrangement is that it will retain the right to appoint its own director on the bank's board. India would have lost this right if its position had slipped down to the ninth place with an allocation of 2.9 per cent shares.

There are countries with less than three per cent shares having their directors on the board, but in order to be able to nominate their own directors, they have to group up with other countries of the region. The cut-off point for the right to appoint a director is 2.96 per cent.

The compromise has been made possible by the constructive role played by the U. K. and a number of leading developing countries. And if it does not fully satisfy India, the consolation is that it is the best that could be done in a bad situation.

If the rich countries that had evolved the earlier formula had so wanted, they could have allotted to India sufficient additional shares from the unused lot and thus enabled it to retain its seventh position. Additional shares were allotted to China to enable it to retain its sixth place.

Similarly, steps were taken to ensure that the U. S. did not lose its right to veto, which it would have lost if its share had slipped below 20 per cent of the total.

In China's case, though no favour was shown, steps were taken only to make sure that it did not lose the position it had enjoyed all along, but no such consideration was shown to India.

The source explained that India was not so much concerned over the loss of its ranking as the possibility of its losing the right to have its own executive director on the board. That problem was crucial, and India had to take the rather extreme step of using the right of pre-emption to block the entire arrangement.

CSO: 4600/1601

PAPER REPORTS INDEFINITE ADJOURNMENT OF PUNJAB TALKS

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 16 Feb 84 pp 1, 9

[Text] New Delhi, Feb. 15.--Tripartite talks to resolve the Punjab tangle, resumed yesterday after almost a year, had to be put off indefinitely today in the face of widespread violence in Punjab, including the killing of policemen near the Golden Temple yesterday in Amritsar, and its repercussions in Haryana today marked by violent clashes in Karnal.

No worthwhile deliberations to reach a settlement could proceed in this atmosphere. It is with this realization that all the parties--the Government, Opposition leaders and Akali representatives--decided to call it a day till the law and order situation in Punjab improved.

In fact, the talks this time had hardly begun. There were some preliminary remarks made by different parties yesterday and today. They met only to adjourn the talks--and the extremists thus had their way in frustrating the move of the moderate Akali leaders to come to the negotiation table.

(PTI adds: During the discussion on yesterday's violence, some Opposition members are understood to have expressed concern over the reports of firing on policemen from inside the Golden Temple complex. They asked the Dal leaders to clarify the position. The Akali leaders are reported to have said that there were reports of provocation from outside the temple complex which led to exchange of fire.)

Today, all the sides condemned violence and appealed to the people of Punjab to stand up for unity, solidarity, brotherhood, communal harmony and peace.

There was a suggestion that the tripartite talks be adjourned to give an opportunity to all to work for the restoration of peace and communal amity in Punjab. It was agreed that the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Mr Buta Singh, would ascertain the convenience of all concerned and fix a date when the talks would be resumed.

It was agreed that the Minister would fix the date once peace returned to the State.

Mr Balwant Singh, Akali leader, who said he was briefing the Press also on behalf of the Government, stated that the Akali delegation wanted to return to Punjab yesterday itself (on hearing the news of trouble breaking out there) "but we did not go lest we be misunderstood (that we have broken the talks)". "Now we want to go back and restore harmony", he said.

The situation in Punjab was deplorable, he added. "We had also organized a bandh on February 8, but we had taken care to post responsible people at various places to keep the bandh peaceful". He thought yesterday's bandh was "uncalled for" and "without any objective". Any consequent tension was natural.

At the start of the meeting today, the Union Home Minister, Mr P. C. Sethi, said: "It is with deep regret that I would make a mention of the unfortunate incidents which occurred yesterday in Punjab. It is regrettable that even as the tripartite talks were being resumed certain elements attempted to vitiate the atmosphere in the State".

He said: "As you are aware, certain organizations led by the Hindu Raksha Samiti had given a call for a bandh in Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh on February 14.

The law and order situation arising out of the bandh call in Punjab took a turn for the worse when clashes took place between groups and with the police forces on duty. In some places, police had to use force and even firing had to be resorted to in some towns. Among the important places where major violence was witnessed are Amritsar, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Ferozepur, Barnala, Kapurthala, Batala and Sunam. According to information received, 10 persons including one policeman lost their lives in the disturbances. Curfew was imposed on Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Patiala and Khanna".

The Home Minister further said: "The situation in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, during the course of the bandh remained by and large peaceful. It is unfortunate that some incidents from Haryana have been reported today.

The CPI(M) leader Mr Harkishen Singh Surjeet, proposed that the meeting be adjourned for the time being to enable all concerned to work for the resotation of peace.

Responding to the proposal, the Akali leader, Mr Prakash Singh Badal, said: "We feel shocked by the unfortunate incidents in Punjab. All of us should join in restoring communal harmony in the State". He agreed with the proposal for the postponement of the talks.

Mr L. K. Advani (Bharatiya Janata Party) agreed with the sentiments expressed by the Akali leaders and said the common man in Punjab was interested in maintaining peace and communal amity. Peace must be maintained at all costs so that anti social elements were not able to take advantage of the situation.

Mr Surjeet Singh Barnala, also of the Akali Dal, shared the views expressed by the Opposition leaders Mr Madhu Dandavate (Janata) agreed with the proposal to adjourn the meeting but thought talks should be resumed after some time. All rumours that led to communal tensions should be scotched.

Mr Jagjivan Ram, leader of the Congress (J) said what had happened in Punjab was very sad as it threatened to damage the social fabric in the State. He agreed with the proposal that the talks be adjourned for a short while. However, during the period of recess informal talks could be continued in an attempt to resolve the disputes.

Agreeing with the proposal to put off the talks, Dr Swarup Singh (Lok Dal) appealed to all concerned for moderation in their statements.

Welcoming the tripartite counterence, the RSP leader, Mr Sourendra Bhatta-charjee M. P., said that his party leader Mr Tridib Chaudhury, M. P., had not invited to the talks as all the other Opposition leaders had been. "Whether from the aspect of representation of the RSP in Parliament or from that of the personal stature of our party leader, his exclusion has surprised us" he said in a statement.

The Cabinet Committee on Punjab Affairs today heard the views of the Haryana Chief Minister, Mr Bhajan Lal, and the president of the Haryana Raksha Vahini, Mr Sher Singh, on resolving the tangle, especially in regard to the title of ownership of Chandigarh and other territorial disputes between Punjab and Haryana.

Mr Bhajan Lal and Mr Sher Singh met the committee separately. The External Affairs Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, Finance Minister, Mr Pranah Mukherjee, and Energy Minister, Mr Shiv Shankar, were present besides Dr P. C. Alexander, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Secretary, Mr Krishnaswamy Rao Saheb, and the Union Home Secretary, Mr T. N. Chaturvedi.

The committee also noted that though the talks had to be adjourned the Akali leaders themselves were so profoundly disturbed by the happenings that they wanted to go back to the State immediately to help restoration of normality there.

On the instructions of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet committee will also hear in the next few days the views of non-Akali Opposition parties in Punjab as well as those of Haryana, so that the Government could ascertain all points of view before deciding on the ticklish issue of the future of Chandigarh, and Fazilka and Abohar tahsils of Punjab.

However, the Haryana Chief Minister was understood to have told the committee that his Government's views in these matters remained unchanged--that Fazilka and Abohar should be ceded to Haryana, if Chandigarh was to be transferred to Punjab in terms of Mrs Gandhi's 1960 award. This was also the stand taken by Mr Sher Singh. The Centre has taken note of the division of opinion among the Opposition parties on the Chandigarh and Abohar-Fazilka issues.

In a statement, Mr Sher Singh regretted that the Dal leaders had been invited by the Government for talks "in spite of a threat given by Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, the Dal president, to burn the Indian Constitution on February 27".

He said: "If Sant Longowal does not publicly and unconditionally apologize for his anti-national and anti-constitutional act, and the talks continue, the volunteers of the Haryana Raksha Vahini will consider staging dharna before the residences of leaders of all political parties, who are a party to the talks". He was convening an urgent meeting of the Vahini.

CSO: 4600/1603

CPI-M RESOLUTION TRIGGERS NEW CONTROVERSY

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 14 Feb 84 p 3

[Text] The resolution adopted at the last meeting of the CPI(M)'s central committee in Delhi about a week ago has admitted that there are democratic elements within the Congress (I) and have urged them to come out openly against Mrs. Gandhi's authoritarianism. This has triggered a new controversy in CPI(M) circle.

The critics of this stand have no ideological difference with the party's central leadership's assessment. They agree that possibly the reality of the present situation has led the leaders to this new formulation. But then they, who include a number of senior leaders and educationists, wonder why the Communist Party split in 1964 when one of the main differences between the CPI and the CPI(M) was whether there were democratic elements within the Congress or not.

They point out that there have been endless discussions and documents at party congresses since then. The CPI(M) had challenged the CPI's stand that there was need for building a united movement with the democratic elements within the Congress. The CPI(M) leaders spared no polemics on this issue. Now they are back to the position of the pre-1964 period.

The central committee's support to Mrs. Gandhi's foreign policy and its criticism of her domestic ~~policy~~, according to critics within the CPI(M), is no new thing. Mrs. Gandhi's unassailable position as the leader of the non-aligned movement has been criticized by the Reagan Administration and hailed by the Soviet Union. But, in its fight against Mrs. Gandhi's authoritarianism, the CPI(M) is joining hands with "undesirable elements." In this context, they refer to the CPI(M) workers' slogan at the recent Opposition conclave in Calcutta, "Red salute to N. T. Rama Rao," who they argue, has links with the BJP. This, they feel, is nothing but opportunism.

Recently two senior CPI(M) leaders expressed their reservations over the handling of the Finance portfolio by the West Bengal Finance Minister, Mr Asok Mitra. They have said at an informal meeting that heavy non-Planned expenditure over the Front's nearly seven-year tenure has retarded the economic progress of the State. The cue is now taken up by those at the State level, who had opposed Mr Mitra's nomination for the Jadavpur Assembly constituency. The Chief Minister had waived these objections on the grounds that there were few competent Ministers like Mr Mitra in his Cabinet.

CSO: 4600/1595

FINANCE MINISTRY SPOKESMAN TELLS IDA STAND

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 14 Feb 84 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, Feb. 14.--India has told the World Bank that it would not give up its "pre-emptive right" under the bank's charter to retain its percentage share of holdings (3.09) which would be eroded by the proposed arrangement for the seventh replenishment of IDA and selective capital increase, reports PTI. The new arrangement involves a drop in India's share by 19 percentage points from 3.09 to 2.90.

A Finance Ministry spokesman deplored the propaganda in the Western press that India was trying to stall the IDA replenishment of \$9 billion intended for concessional loans for poorer countries.

The spokesman said that India was "quite happy" that Japan would take the second place with regard to share-holdings and that China would get special allocation to retain its sixth position. This had been made "abundantly clear."

What India was seeking was to retain its percentage of shares it had held since 1970, and to ensure that the combined share of all developing countries was not reduced, from the present 42 to 40 per cent, as the new funding arrangement envisages, the spokesman said.

He disclosed that India had suggested in a spirit of compromise, that it could be allotted shares out of the "unallocated" category as India did not want to disrupt or wreck the arrangement worked out among the developed countries with regard to their respective shares.

The spokesman said that, for the first time, IDA replenishment had been linked to a selective capital increase of the World Bank of \$8.4 billion which had led to an unprecedented situation.

For the first time again, the arrangement with regard to replenishment had been so designed that it required some countries to give up their preemptive right in terms of retaining the percentage shares and the voting power that goes with it under the articles of agreement of the World Bank.

CSO: 4600/1597

VOTING ATTITUDES OF SOCIAL GROUPINGS EXAMINED

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 14-16 Feb 84

[14 Feb 84 pp 1, 9]

[Article by E. P. W. Da Costa]

[Text] The voting intentions and the likely behaviour of the multiplier, as described in my previous reports, are, in a sense only statistical aggregates. We have also to explain motivations. Thus, a pre-election forecast is an exercise similar to that undertaken by market researches. We have to find out not only how they intend to vote, but also why two areas in which voter responses can be measured are particularly important.

One of these, long known in Indian elections, is the preference of the minorities, particularly the Muslims, the Christians and the Sikhs, for the Congress. In the case of the Sikhs there may be a reversal of their traditional preference, though it appeared in the Delhi elections in February 1983 that a majority of them still sided with the Congress.

Again, it has been known that except in March 1979 when there was a sharp turn towards the Janata because of the influence of Mr. Jagjivan Ram, the Harijans have remained steadily loyal to the Congress party. This aspect is dealt with in a following article.

This article deals with another important issue. This is the continuing debate on "stability" as voters view it, and the extent to which different parties, by electoral alliance or otherwise? Can a government formed by ensures or reduces "stability". The question asked was: "Some people say that a government formed by several parties cannot be stable. Others say it can be stable. What have you to say? can a government formed by several parties be stable or not?"

Table I below gives the responses in five states in the current survey of the Hindi heartland. Only a small minority holds that a government by several parties can be "stable". The highest figure is in Rajasthan at 24 per cent and the lowest in Bihar at five per cent. There are, however, some qualified answers which marginally increase the figure. Nevertheless two observations can be made. A very large proportion of those interviewed, particularly high at 64 per cent in Bihar, 34 per cent in Haryana and 30 per cent in U. P., declined to give an opinion. A much larger number said that a government by

several parties could not be stable. This is highest at 56 per cent in Madhya Pradesh, 58 per cent in U. P., and about 50 per cent in Rajasthan and Haryana. It would, therefore, be fair to assume that the electorate in its current mood is likely to look with favour upon at the Congress in that it promises to provide more stability than any combinations of parties. Thus, all opposition parties, particularly the two alliances, need to take heed of the fact that the electorate is still suspicious of coalitions.

To identify the special reaction to the two major alliances in the north, the National Democratic Alliance between the BJP and the Lok Dal and the United Front led by the Janata, a question was asked: "Some political parties have forged an electoral alliance to fight the coming elections to the Lok Sabha and the state assemblies. Which of the following alliances do you favour?"

Table II shows the results of the responses. It will be seen that in Rajasthan 36 per cent are in favour of the National Democratic Alliance. It is also not placed too low in Uttar Pradesh with 24 per cent. The United Front led by the Janata, however, does not even get a double digit figure except in Uttar Pradesh where the figure is just 10 per cent. A solid block which contains a large fraction of the Congress vote is very strong against both-- in Madhya Pradesh at 51 per cent, in Harvana at 40 per cent, and in U. P. at 30 per cent. The "no opinion" category is also large, particularly in Bihar, Haryana, U. P. and Rajasthan. One can conclude at the moment that an electoral alliance based on the National Democratic Alliance or the United Front would fare less well than the Congress not only because of the electorate's preference for "stability" through a single party, but also because of the somewhat conflicting attitudes of the voters towards the two main opposition alliances. The broad preference is for a single party government.

TABLE I [Numbering of tables as published]

Some people say that a government formed by several parties cannot be stable. Others say it can be stable. What would you say? Can the government formed by several parties be stable or not?

State	Total No. of Respondents	(Percentages)			
		Government by several parties can be stable	Qualified	Government by several parties cannot be stable	Can't say
Bihar	1,000	5	..	31	64
Rajasthan	1,000	24	3	50	23
Madhya Pradesh	1,000	18	..	56	26
Uttar Pradesh	1,000	11	1	58	30
Haryana	500	15	2	49	34

TABLE II

Some political parties have forged an electoral alliance to fight the coming elections for the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies. Which of the following alliances do you favour?

(Percentages)

State	Total No. of Respondents	N.D.A. = B.J.P. + Lok Dal	U.F. = Janata Party + Congress(S) + Democratic Socialist Party	Neither	No opinion
Bihar	1000	14	7	19	60
Rajasthan	1000	36	6	25	33
Madhya Pradesh	1000	22	7	51	20
Uttar Pradesh	1000	24	10	30	36
Haryana	500	10	6	40	44

[15 Feb 84 pp 1, 9]

[Article by E. P. W. Da Costa]

[Text]

QUITE early in the history of political polling in the Indian Union—in fact from the first all-India poll conducted by the Indian Institute of Public Opinion in 1957—it was apparent that the Congress derived more support from the minorities than it did from the majority Hindu vote. The 1957 sample was relatively small with only 2868 respondents. The figures given in Table I below for the Hindu vote against the Muslim, Christian and Sikh vote will show that, in this survey, the Congress Muslim vote was 52.7 per cent, the Congress Christian vote 58.8 per cent and the Congress Sikh vote 63.2 per cent, all higher than the Hindu vote of 48 per cent. Indeed the major new finding which emerged from the survey was that the popular vote for the Congress among the minorities was invariably higher than that among the Hindu majority.

It will be seen that the undecided vote was also large and, for the Muslims, this was as high as 24.4 per cent. Therefore it is possible that even in 1957 the Muslim vote for the Congress might have exceeded 60 per cent. The same survey produced the evidence that the minority vote in the 1952 election to the Lok Sabha was possibly higher. The figure recorded for the Congress was 58.4

per cent from Muslims, 64.1 per cent from Christians and 62.6 per cent from Sikhs. Thus although, there was no survey in 1952, the assumption seems to be justified that from the earliest elections the minority vote has been predominantly on the Congress side.

Sample surveys in 1962 and 1967 confirmed the higher Muslim contribution to the Congress vote than the average; in 1967 this seemed to be stable even though the Congress popular vote declined to 40 per cent. In 1971, the Muslim vote ascended steeply, but seemed to have been reduced in 1977 to less than 35 per cent in north India. This was still higher than the Congress overall popular vote which in north India had slumped to 25 per cent. It recovered to about 50 per cent in 1980. Where does it stand now?

In the current survey the distribution of the Muslim vote appears as shown in Table VI. 2 below.

It will be seen that of the total number of 649 Muslim respondents, 236 were in U.P., 179 in Bihar and 123 in Madhya Pradesh. In all the states surveyed, the Congress enjoys a majority of the Muslim vote, but in the two largest states of U.P. and Bihar, the majority is small, parti-

cularly if one considers the sampling error which could be three percentage points with a confidence level of 95 in 100.

Overall with the Muslim vote weighted by the number of seats in each state, the Congress appears to have a figure of near 60 per cent. On the other hand, since this is composed of elements with sampling errors of three percentage points the figure could be down to 57 per cent. This is still a very impressive figure, and suggests that the Muslim community as a whole feel more secure

TABLE VI. 1

For which Party did you vote during the 1957 elections for the Lok Sabha?

.... ALL-INDIA: MARCH 1957

'Minorities' voting preference

Religion	No. of Respondents	(Percentages)										Total
		Congress	P.S.P.	Communist	Jan Sangh	Socialist	Hindu Mahasabha	Independents	Other parties	Un-decided	Don't know and others	
Hindus	2263	48.1	2.1	6.6	0.4	1.4	0.7	2.2	6.3	15.0	17.2	100.00
Muslims	245	52.7	1.6	3.3	—	0.4	—	2.0	1.2	18.4	20.4	100.00
Christians	170	58.8	0.6	7.1	—	0.6	—	0.6	4.1	10.6	17.6	100.00
Sikhs	87	63.2	—	2.3	—	—	—	1.1	2.3	25.3	5.8	100.00
Others	103	41.8	1.9	9.7	—	—	—	1.9	8.8	10.7	25.2	100.00

with the Congress than with other parties.

However, other parties have recovered significantly, particularly in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In U. P., the National Democratic Alliance seems to command 21 per cent of the Muslim vote and the United Front 13 per cent. Overall in all the states together, the United Front seems to just pass the National Democratic Alliance but both together command over 28 per cent of the Muslim vote. But the conclusion is not in doubt that in an early Lok Sabha election, the Congress will be able to rely on the traditional Muslim vote in no less a degree than in January 1980.

TABLE VI. 2

THE HINDI HEARTLAND: THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE MUSLIM VOTE : DECEMBER 1983

	(Percentages)						Weighted with Number of 1957 votes
	Muslim Respondents N=649	Bihar N=179	Uttar Pradesh N=236	Madhya Pradesh N=123	Rajasthan N=87	Haryana, Himachal Pradesh & Delhi N=24	
Congress (I)	55	55	65	69	71	59.8	
United Front	17	13	9	16	21	14.3	
National Democratic Alliance	8	21	11	8	4	13.1	
C.P.I.	7	—	—	—	—	1.7	
Others	13	11	15	7	4	11.1	

[16 Feb 84, pp 1, 9]

[Article by E. P. W. Da Costa]

[Text] As with the Congress party's hold on Muslims described in the previous article, one must now perform a similar exercise to assess the current mood among Harijans; in particular whether they bear a similar loyalty to the

Congress. Unlike in the case of minorities, detailed studies of the Harijan vote began much later. It was known generally that the Harijans and some scheduled tribes were more favourably disposed towards the Congress than towards other opposition parties. However, the components of the Harijan vote were documented by the Indian Institute of Public Opinion only in March 1974.

Again, in all cases except that of March 1974, the samples have contained significantly less than 1,000 respondents which means sampling errors are high. There is, therefore, less firm evidence on the magnitude of the Harijan vote that is firmly anchored to the Congress. There is also some exaggeration in the current belief that the Harijans turn-out at elections is high. It is the scheduled tribes rather than the scheduled castes that make a ritual of collective appearance and achieve exceptionally high turn-outs. The Harijans do not have equal concentration in particular areas and, generally, are less cohesive in their political commitments.

The Indian Institute of Public Opinion attaches more importance to its "benchmark" survey of March 1974 than to the sub-samples of all-India surveys thereafter where voting intentions of Harijans, as distinct from other Hindu voters, are recorded. In the first all-India Harijan survey of March 1974, the structure of the Harijan vote appeared as in table VII (1) below. In March 1974, the Congress held 44 per cent of the vote; with a sampling error of three percentage points in 1,500 interviews, the vote could have been as low as 41 per cent. The "undecided" vote, as the table shows, was extremely large at 24 per cent. There is no conclusive evidence to show that the Congress held a majority of the Harijan vote.

In March 1977, when Mr. Jagjivan Ram defected from the Congress, a relatively small sample of 585 interviews showed that the mean Harijan Congress vote as estimated in March 1974 had been halved. Table VII (2) shows that disenchantment appeared not only among young voters between 21 and 35; it was also strong among illiterates and more in rural, than in urban, areas. In that survey the Janata and the Congress for Democracy led by Mr. Jagjivan Ram seem to have captured 32 per cent of the Harijan vote against the Congress survey vote of 22 per cent. The "undecided" vote was still very high at 29 per cent, emphasising the floating character of the vote as in 1974. In December 1979, the mean appeared higher but, even on this occasion, it is uncertain whether the majority of the Harijan vote was ever committed to the Congress. This is a major finding. Contrary to a widespread belief the Harijan vote is sharply divided; a majority is not generally committed to the Congress side.

How, against this background, does one rank the current situation? Table VII (3) shows the distribution of the Harijan vote in the current survey in Hindi-speaking states in December 1983. Here the best guess emerges from the consolidated figure with each state weighted with the number of Lok Sabha seats. It indicates a figure of 45.8 per cent for the Congress similar to the first benchmark survey of March 1974 which, however, was for the whole country. It is probably correct to state that the majority Harijan vote, unlike that of the minorities, is not committed to the Congress. It is also capable of substantial fluctuations.

The conclusion is also valid that some new disenchantment has appeared among the Harijans in the Hindi heartland. In the current poll, fairly high percentages are recorded on the side of the United Front in Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi; also for the National Democratic Alliance in U. P., Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Each of the opposition alliances seem to command about one-fifth of the Harijan vote. This probably indicates an erosion in the previous trend, particularly in Bihar where the Congress Harijan vote has come down to 35 per cent, while the two major alliances seem to command 44 per cent. There is more than a suggestion that the opposition has made major inroads into the Congress Harijan vote in Bihar.

TABLE VII. 3
THE HINDI HEARTLAND:
DISTRIBUTION OF THE HARIJAN VOTE:
DECEMBER 1983

(Percentages)						
Party	Bihar N = 109	Uttar Pradesh N = 157	Madhya Pradesh N = 161	Rajasthan N = 142	Haryana, Himachal Pradesh & Delhi N = 133	Weighted with number of Lok Sabha Seats
Congress (I)	35	47	51	49	56	45.8
United Front	31	46	9	16	23	19.0
National Democratic Alliance	11	22	27	22	18	19.9
C.P.I.	15	—	—	—	—	3.6
Others	8	15	13	13	3	11.7

TABLE VII. 1
THE STRUCTURE OF
HARIJAN VOTE

If there were an election tomorrow, for which party would you vote?

Party	Actual	Percent
Congress (R)	664	44
Congress (O)	62	4
Jan Sangh	42	3
Swatantra	2	—
C.P.I.	40	3
C.P.I. (M)	16	1
Other Parties	184	12
Undecided	356	24
Don't know	134	9
Total	1500	100

TABLE VII. 2
THE STRUCTURE OF THE HARIJAN VOTE: MARCH 1977

If an election were held tomorrow, for which party would you vote in the coming Lok Sabha Elections?

(Percentages)										
	No. of Respon- dents	Cong- ress	Janata	Congress for Democracy	CPI	CPI (M)	Others	Don't know	Unde- cided	Total
SEX										
Male	410	26	28	11	1	5	—	11	18	100
Female	175	11	9	6	—	2	—	19	53	100
AGE (in years)										
21 — 35	242	19	30	5	—	5	—	12	29	100
36 — 50	207	22	16	11	—	5	—	16	30	100
Above 50	136	25	19	15	1	1	—	12	27	100
EDUCATION										
Illiterate	398	19	20	9	—	4	—	16	32	100
Primary or less	115	23	19	12	2	3	1	9	21	100
Middle or less	36	30	31	11	—	6	—	—	22	100
Under matriculate	23	31	17	4	—	4	—	22	22	100
Higher Secondary	11	18	18	—	—	—	—	18	46	100
Others	2	100	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	100
AREA										
Urban	177	32	21	3	—	6	—	12	26	100
Rural	408	17	23	12	1	3	—	14	30	100
TOTAL	585	21	22	10	1	4	—	13	29	100

THREATS AGAINST KARACHI CONSULATE STAFF REPORTED

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 16 Feb 84 p 1

[Text] The life of members of the Indian Consulate General in Karachi has been threatened in a number of telephone calls, all anonymous, that the staff have received since the hanging in New Delhi of terrorist Maqbool Butt.

Confirming this on Wednesday, an official spokesman said the Government has officially brought these threats to the notice of the Pakistani authorities and sought from them assurances that they will take necessary steps for the security of the Indian staff.

India also protested to Pakistan on the damage done to the consulate property and vehicles in stone-throwing by a mob in Karachi. Similar incidents are also reported to have taken place in some other places.

Secessionist Kashmiri elements operating from Pakistan have been considerably emboldened in their attacks and threats against Indian employees of the embassy, consulate and Indian Airlines offices, because of the official support they have received in recent days.

There is no official comment yet from the Indian foreign office, but India has noted President Zia-ul-Haq's reported statement describing Maqbool Butt as a martyr. Obviously, such statements cannot but be taken very seriously. Apart from being an interference in the affairs of another country--in their open support for secessionist activity--they also encourage elements within Pakistan to threaten violence against Indians living there. Pakistan must ensure that nothing untoward must happen, it is felt.

India, meanwhile, is keeping in touch with the progress of investigations into the Mhatre murder. The official spokesman pointed out that the matter was still open, as the killers had not been apprehended, and obviously India cannot consider the issue closed till those guilty of the dastardly crime are brought to book. The body of Assistant Commissioner Ravindar Mhatre is still in England where the police have said, they may conduct another autopsy on it. Only then will the body be allowed to be brought to India, probably to his hometown Bombay, for cremation.

His widow and daughter are returning to Bombay on Thursday. In a gesture of the nation's solidarity with them in their bereavement, and in sharing their grief, acting Foreign Secretary Romesh Bhandare is flying to Bombay to receive the mother and child.

CSO: 4600/1605

KASHMIR LEADER WARNS SECESSIONIST ELEMENTS

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 16 Feb 84 p 6

[Text] Srinagar, Feb. 15 (PTI)—Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah lashed out at the secessionist elements, especially leaders of Jamat-i-i-Islam and said that those who challenge the finality of accession of Jammu and Kashmir with India "have no place in the State" and "my Government will crush them with an iron hand."

The Chief Minister, who is also the president of the ruling National Conference, was addressing his party workers here yesterday afternoon.

He thanked the people for maintaining peace in valley when Mohammad Maqbool Butt, co-founder of Kashmir Liberation Front, was hanged on Saturday morning.

Dr Farooq alleged that Congress-I had tried in vain to create problems, by exploiting this issue, and added "I have reports that in Sopore town Congress-I sympathisers had observed hartal when Butt was executed."

The Chief Minister said that he was not for any confrontation with the Centre and wanted better relations with the Union Government.

"We are only against the State unit of Congress-I which is trying to mislead the people of the State and creating problems for my Government."

He alleged that attempts were being made to "buy" the National Conference legislators "in a bid to topple my Government."

He described as "total lie, baseless and ridiculous" the allegation that there was any injustice being done to minorities in Jammu and Kashmir, but added that "knowing well that there was no truth in this allegation, I appointed a high-level commission with former Chief Election Commissioner S.L. Shakdar, an honest officer, as its chairman."

Dr Abdullah said Congress-I efforts to tarnish his image had failed to succeed, because opposition leaders had rejected such allegations.

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ONGC CHAIRMAN OUTLINES PLANS FOR FUTURE

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 16 Feb 84 p 21

[Text] Bombay, February 15. The Oil and Natural Gas Commission is confident of discovering much more oil in future than has been hitherto discovered.

Its optimism is based on its being able to establish about 3.5 billion tonnes of in-place hydrocarbon reserves.

A conceptual plan for the period 1985-2005 A. D., in fact, aims at a terminal production target of 100 million tonnes per annum. It compares with today's production level of 23 million tonnes per annum.

The prognosticated reserves (hydrocarbon resources) estimated at 12.84 billion tonnes in 1976 had been recently revised to 15.5 billion tonnes, Col. S. P. Wahi, chairman of ONGC, told newsmen here yesterday.

He said against these prognosticated resources, ONGC had established initial geological reserves equivalent to 3,497.88 million tonnes of oil and oil equivalent gas and initial recoverable reserves of 1,021.93 million tonnes. Hence the optimism about discovering much more oil in future.

New Basins

ONGC was extending the exploration thrust to basins other than Bombay off-shore, Cambay and Upper Assam (where the efforts were so far concentrated) which possessed hydrocarbons but were not found commercial, basins without significant shows but considered to be prospective on geological grounds and basins on the analogy of similar hydrocarbon producing basins in the world.

It was proposed to explore extensively and develop areas falling within Cambay basins, Kutch, Saurashtra, Upper Assam, Assam-Arakan, Bengal, Krishna-Godavari, Cauvery, Rajasthan, Ganga Valley and Himalayan foothills, Col. Wahi said.

Most of the expenditure would be met from ONGC's own internal resources and, if required, the gap between the planned dose of investments and internal generation of resources would be financed through borrowings indigenously or from abroad, he added.

The outlay for the seventh plan itself was expected to be Rs. 18,000 crores, which was 2 1/2 times of that of the sixth plan.

ONGC was gearing itself to achieve self-reliance in technology in the near future, besides self-sufficiency in oil and natural gas and self-reliance in equipment and services, Col. Wahi said.

The organisation was spearheading a massive indigenisation programme of oil field equipment and facilities in the country, the ONGC chairman said.

Construction of production platforms, jack-up rigs, drill ships and supply vessels had been assigned to various shipyards in the country and oilfield equipment manufacturers helped to finalise collaboration arrangements for transfer of technology.

Tenders were being floated for contract drilling (by private parties) in high technology areas relating to the exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons.

Its efforts at import substitution had resulted in a foreign-exchange saving of Rs. 380,48 crores (till March, last year), of which Rs. 158.32 crores was in 1982-83.

A big thrust was also being given to R&D efforts to reduce technological gaps. An institute of engineering and ocean technology was being set up at Panvel, New Bombay, at an estimated cost of Rs. 9.8 crores and an institute of production technology, at a cost of Rs. 5 crores.

Universities, units of the Indian Institute of Technology and other educational institutions would be involved in the R&D efforts, he said. An advisory group of eminent scientists had been set up to interact with these institutions.

In reply to a question, Col. Wahi said the outlay on exploration at the Godavari basin was Rs. 600 crores, of which Rs. 120 was from the World Bank. So there was no question of the World Bank laying any conditions on how exploration should be carried out there.

CSO: 4600/1602

GANDHI COMMENTS ON NAVY'S PREPAREDNESS

Madras THE HINDU in English 14 Feb 84 p 9

[Text] Bombay, Feb. 13. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, today dedicated to the nation the Bombay High Shouth (BHS) platform complex at an off-shore function. She appreciated the performance of the ONGC and the contribution it is making to the country's economy.

She was received on the platform by Mr. P. Shiv Shankar, Union Energy Minister, Mr. A. S. Gill, Petroleum Secretary and Col. S. P. Wahi, Chairman, ONGC.

The platform complex, commissioned in October 1982, enabled the ONGC to achieve a production rate of 400,000 barrels a day in March 1983, two full years ahead of schedule. This is 20 million tonnes per annum.

Mr. Shiv Shankar recalled the vision of Nehru in regard to oil self-sufficiency and said the new platform, costing Rs. 270 crores, had helped the ONGC double its production from the Bombay High. The daily value of production was approximately Rs. 5 crores. Four more such platforms are due to be commissioned before 1986.

Col. Wahi attributed the increase in production to the inspiration received from the Prime Minister, the guidance from the Energy Minister and the efforts of the ONGC officers and employees.

The platform complex, the largest, is located in the southern part of the Bombay High. It consists of two major platforms--the process platform and the living quarters platform which are inter-connected to an already existing platform.

Installed in water at a depth of 76.8 metres, the complex was built in 30 months. It receives hydrocarbons from eleven well platforms.

The complex has self-contained living quarters for 124 persons with catering and recreational facilities. It also has a 24-hour operation communication room and a highly sophisticated control room besides a laboratory and a workshop.

The significance of the BHS platform complex lies in the fact that it marks a 100 per cent increase in the total pumping capacity of the Bombay High field from 180,000 barrels of oil a day to 360,000 barrels a day.

The complex also helped in raising the gas compression capacity by over 100 per cent and today over 4.5 million cubic metres of gas a day can be transported to the Uran plant for providing over 600 tonnes of LPG a day besides fertilizer and power.

Navy Will Be Modernised

Bombay, Feb. 13. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, today congratulated officers and sailors of the Indian Navy for their smart exercises and expressed the hope that the future of the country would be safe in their hands.

She was addressing the naval fleet during "a day at sea" after witnessing exercises on board INS Vikrant and at Bombay High, for nearly 150 minutes.

Mrs. Gandhi urged the Navy to prepare itself to meet the twin challenges of protecting the country's vast coastline and its maritime resources.

She told the sailors on board the aircraft carrier, the flagship of Admiral O. S. Dawson, Chief of the Naval Staff, that "the country is proud of your achievements and our confidence has increased manifold".

Recalling her long-standing association with the aircraft carrier, she said efforts would be made to meet all the operational requirements of the Navy.

"It is true that we have not been able to give you all the equipment you need, but I assure you every effort will be made to modernise the Navy and keep it fighting fit".

Mrs. Gandhi was accompanied by her son Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, MP, the Defence Minister, Mr. R. Venkataraman, the Petroleum Minister, Mr. Shiv Shanker, the Minister of State for Defence, Mr. K. P. Singh Deo, the Maharashtra Chief Minister, Mr. Vasantrao Patil and other top defence and civil officials.

The highlight of the exercises was the firing of anti-ship missiles from the modified guided-missile destroyer INS Rajput. The destroyer came asterns INS Vikrant and fired a surface-to-surface missile from one of its launchers located below the bridge.

The missile, which has a range of 100 km. streaked out of its launcher, trailing a bright orange flame. It shot up in a parabolic arc before stabilising at its flying height.

Welcoming the Prime Minister, Admiral Dawson said Bombay High was not just a source of oil, it was "perhaps our most crucial, vulnerable area today. We must have the capacity to ensure its unhindered exploitation, in peace and in war".

With the induction of the Sea Harriers, INS Vikrant's capability had increased manifold. The Rajput class ships, the most powerful ships of their size in the world, had added yet another dimension to sea power. Also on view was the Godavari, the first indigenously designed ship. These ships and aircraft would try and project a broad view of "what sea power is" Admiral Dawson said.

The flying demonstration was highlighted by the Sea Harriers with short take-off from a mere 100-metre runway, which is half the full axial length of the aircraft carrier's flight deck.

Fireworks display: The beating the retreat ceremony, which was to be held on Sunday as part of the naval review by the President, Mr. Zail Singh, but cancelled due to the passing away of the Soviet President, Andropov, will now be held at 6 p. m. on Wednesday at the Gateway of India. The fireworks display and the illumination of fleet ships will be held thereafter.--PTI, UNI.

CSO: 4600/1598

STATES, TERRITORIES FINALIZE PLAN OUTLAYS

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 14 Feb 84 p 5

[Text] The 1984-85 plan outlays of 17 States finalised so far show an increase of a little more than 12 per cent over the provision for the current year, reports UNI.

For the five Union Territories whose outlays for the 1984-85 plans have been approved by the Planning Commission, the increase is about 18 per cent.

The States whose plan outlays for the next year are yet to be finalised are West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Tripura and Rajasthan and the Union Territories of Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep and the Andaman and Nicobar islands.

The outlays of 17 States already finalised total Rs 9,058 crores against Rs 8,062.62 crores in 1983-84. The total outlays of five Union Territories is Rs 483 crores against Rs 409.22 crores in the current year.

The rate of increase in State outlays for 1984-85, the last year of the sixth Plan, is about five per cent lower than the 17 per cent rise recorded in 1983-84 over the previous year.

The lower rate of increase may be due to two reasons. First the outlays for the next financial year were considered in the context of the general need for economy. Second, the emphasis is mainly on competition of on-going projects to avoid cost and time over-runs.

The outlay of West Bengal's annual plan for 1984-85 could not be finalised despite two rounds of discussions. Union Planning Minister SB Chavan had with Chief Minister Jyoti Basu.

The main difficulty, according to Commission sources, was the State's heavy and continuing overdrafts. Already the Union Finance Minister has directed the Reserve Bank to stop further payments to West Bengal if the overdrafts exceeded the level of Rs 180 crores.

It appears that West Bengal's annual plan for 1984-85 will be finalised only after the State

Government sorts out the overdraft problem with the Minister.

In the case of Punjab, now under President's rule, the hitch is over mobilisation of additional resources by the State government for the plan.

The outlay of Uttar Pradesh could not be finalised because the Chief Minister has been

occupied with matters concerning his Ministry.

Discussions on Rajasthan's plan outlay are over but the Planning commission is yet to announce the approved outlay.

The Tripura plan for 1984-85 is yet to be considered. It may be discussed after Mr Chavan returns to new Delhi on 20 February from a tour.

The following are the outlays of the 17 States and five Union Territories for 1984-85 with the figures for the current year in brackets in crores of rupees:

Andhra Pradesh 918 (826), Assam 360 (291), Bihar 751 (681), Gujarat 935 (900), Haryana 430 (407), Himachal Pradesh 165 (140), Jammu and Kashmir 235 (185), Karnataka 650 (575), Kerala 355 (320), Madhya Pradesh 1,065 (855), Maharashtra 1,650 (1,500), Manipur 61 (52.80), Meghalaya 65 (56.32), Nagaland 56 (51), Orissa 400 (345), Sikkim 35 (30.50), and Tamil Nadu 927 (845). Arunachal Pradesh 63 (52.80), Delhi 290 (250), Goa, Daman and Diu 60 (51.12), Mizoram 40 (34.80) and Pondicherry 30 (20.50).

INDIA DEVELOPS MOBILE SURVEILLANCE RADAR

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 15 Feb 84 p 5

[Text] Bangalore, Feb. 14 (PTI)—The country's first indigenously designed mobile surveillance radar which can detect low-flying high-speed enemy aircraft is almost ready for being handed over to the services for user trials.

The two-crore rupee radar has been developed by the Electronics and Radar Development Establishment (LRDE) a key R and D defence laboratory, over an eight year period.

LRDE director R.P. Shenoy said the radar would be a contemporary piece of equipment even in the 1990's.

The low flying detection radar (LFDR) system comprises a highly sensitive antenna receiver, high power transmitter, and a powerful signal processing display unit.

Explaining the working of the LFDR radar Dr Shenoy said the high power transmitter would first throw up high energy in a concentrated beam. The beam would then be reflected by the aircraft and received by an antenna system.

The transmitter called Klystron transmitter was the only system of the radar which was in the last stages of development and would soon be switched on the test power reliability.

Dr Shenoy said the Klystron transmitter was far better than the present available systems capable of less noise production.

There were two types of antenna systems available for use with the LFDR system, he said. One of them was a powerful signal processing system eliminating unwanted targets of echoes against a background of heavy ground clutter. This radar was ideally suited for use in rocky regions like mountains. It was also equipped with a two-colour display system.

The other radar with a single colour display was more suited for a soft background like desert conditions and was less sophisticated.

The two-colour display enabled superimposition of radar data processor information on the primary radar information for quick comprehension of the operator. Information from any other sources could also be superimposed in yet another colour for better man-machine interface.

Dr Shenoy said the multi-colour display also had an identification system. If a particular

aircraft failed to give the radar operator a prescribed code usually given to friendly planes it could be termed as a hostile aircraft and fired upon.

Other projects being currently pursued in the fields of radar, communication and portable power sources are include the shipborne radar systems capable of detecting and tracking sea skimmer missiles, airborne radars based on electronics scanning techniques and air-to-air search modes and radars for missile systems.

Some of the radars for missile systems were

in an advanced stage of completion and some others were already being fabricated by industry.

Dr Shenoy said in the last decade the LRDE had grown considerably with the material utilisation for project development and associated activities increasing from Rs 34 lakhs in 1968-69 to Rs 480 lakhs in 1982-83.

Another major line of LRDE activity was the transfer of know-how to small as well as large industries such as BEL, ITI, ECIL and various state electronic development corporations.

He said a speech secrecy digital telephone set had been developed in the communication segment. Describing it as the last word in digital technology Dr Shenoy said the set provided for conversion of voice into digital mode at the telephone level thus eliminating impersonation and preventing access to unauthorised persons.

The LRDE has also developed an avalanche victim detector capable of locating a man buried in snow.

Dr Shenoy said the equipment could detect a victim buried in 10 metres of snow by means of a "homing device" monitored by the search party 60 metres away.

The equipment had been successfully used to locate victims four times in the forward snow-bound areas of Leh, Kashmir and the eastern sector.

BRIEFS

TRADE WITH HUNGARY--Budapest, Feb 28 (PTI)--The trade turnover between India and Hungary grew from \$65.7 million in 1982 to \$92.4 million in 1983 recording an almost 1.5 times increase, but the imbalance in the bilateral turnover rose by a still more conspicuous pace. Hungary's sales to India amounted to \$75.5 million in 1983, but its purchases from that country totalled a meagre \$16.8 million. In 1982 Hungarian exports had aggregated \$43.4 million and its totalled \$22.3 million. Fifty-six per cent of Hungary's imports from India consisted of consumer goods, garments, shoe uppers, cosmetics, 34 per cent industrial raw materials, iron ore, textile raw materials and 10 per cent tea and spices. A considerable figure was reached by non-traditional items: hand tools worth over \$one million and electric entertainment items. As for Hungary's exports to India, 91 per cent was machine engineering products, equipment for thermal power station, telecommunication installations, lamp production machines and spares, eight per cent steel products and pharmaceutical material. Hungarian experts see scope for raising sales to India in water conservancy and thermal plant equipment, in the production of heavy-duty trucks, telecommunication, aluminium industry, in the transfer of energy-saving technology, water management and agriculture. The experts feel that India could sell more of consumer goods, electronic and micro-electronic products and a wide range of machine engineering products to Hungary. Hungarian officials revealed that Hungarian companies are constantly studying the possibility of diverting some of their imports to India. [Text] [New Delhi PATRIOT in English 29 Feb 84 p 2]

NEW POLITICAL POLICY--Vijayawada, Feb. 26.--Mr M. Chenna Reddy, former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, announced here today the formation of a new political party under his leadership--the National Democratic Party, report PTI and UNI. The new party was based on secularism, socialism and democracy and would uphold Gandhian principles, Mr Reddy said. Replying to a question, Mr Reddy said it was wrong to say that regional parties posed a threat to the integrity of the country. "They (regional parties) are the by-products of the malfunctioning of national politics", he said. He said that his party was a national party and would later organize its units in the other States. "It is good ride of our party", Mr Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy, president of the Andhra Pradesh Congress (I) Committee, said while commenting on Mr Chenna Reddy's move. [Text] [Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 27 Feb 84 p 1]

ANDHRA PRADESH MINISTER--Hyderabad, Feb. 19.--The Andhra Pradesh Labour Minister, Mr M. Ramalhandra Rao who was allegedly trapped receiving a bribe from

an industrialist on Thursday was today dismissed from the Cabinet, reports UNI. A Raj Bhavan communique issued here late tonight said the Governor Mr Ram Lal had removed Mr Rao from the Council of Ministers with immediate effect on the recommendation of the Chief Minister Mr N. T. Rama Rao. Earlier Ramachandra Rao met the Governor and was understood to have told him of Thursday's incident when a man posing as an industrialist had left an envelope containing Rs 10,000 on his table, apparently in return for a favour. Soon after his departure, the Deputy Inspector-General of Police (Intelligence) Mr V. Appa Rao entered the Minister's room and told him that the money offered was a trap laid for him by the Chief Minister. Mr Ramachandra Rao was reported to have told the Governor that the manner in which the trap had been laid was unfair, unethical and aimed at finishing him politically. He is understood to have suggested that a judicial inquiry be ordered into the incident. He also met the Finance Minister, Mr N. Bhaskara Rao. [Text] [Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 20 Feb 84 p 1]

GANDHI SWEDISH VISIT--New Delhi, Feb. 15.--The Prime Minister is expected to pay an official visit to Sweden later this year, reports PTI. This was revealed at the plenary session of the Indo-Swedish Joint Commission here yesterday. [Text] [Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 16 Feb 84 p 12]

INDO-ITALIAN LOAN AGREEMENT--New Delhi, Feb. 15.--The first Indo-Italian agreement on grant of a soft loan of \$9.9 million was signed here on Monday, reports UNI. The soft loan, repayable over 11 years at 2.25% interest is to be utilized for part financing of the thermal power station for the fertilizer plant at Namrup, Assam. [Text] [Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 16 Feb 84 p 13]

BIHAR MINISTER RESIGNS--Patna, February 14 (PTI): Bihar's minister for rural reconstruction and panchayati raj, Mr. Rafiq Alam, MP, has ceased to be a minister after the expiry of six months within which he was required to be elected either to the state assembly or council. Mr. Alam, who is a member of the Rajya Sabha, was sworn in as minister along with the chief minister, Mr. Chandra Sekhar Singh on August 14 last. The portfolio held by him will be looked after by the chief minister, according to official sources here. [Text] [Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 15 Feb 84 p 7]

NAKASONE MAY VISIT--Tokyo, Feb. 14. The Japanese Prime Minister, Mr. Yasuhiro Nakasone, himself confirmed his plans to visit India in early May when he asked a Diet member today to tell the Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, that the Foreign Ministry was making preparations for his visit. Mr. Nakasone told this to Mr. Takashi Sato, a Liberal Democratic Party member of the House of Representatives, when he called on the Prime Minister shortly before leaving for New Delhi to attend the Asian Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development which will get under way later this week. [Text] [Madras THE HINDU in English 15 Feb 84 p 9]

AGREEMENT WITH SWEDEN--New Delhi, Feb. 13. Traditional handicrafts and textile products, known as "India items", have been granted quota-free access into the Swedish market for the first time. This was announced today when a bilateral textile agreement was formally signed between Mr. Axel Edelstam, ambassador of Sweden in New Delhi and Mr. N. K. Sabharwal, Joint Secretary, Department of Textiles. Higher limits have been provided in relevant groups to take care of the interest of handloom products. The increase in relevant product groups for 1984 ranges between 9.4 per cent and 14.66 per cent. The agreement is valid from January 1, 1983 to December 31, 1986, with provision for extension for one more year by mutual consent. The Indo-Swedish Joint Commission has set up four sub-commissions to deal with energy, trade, science and technology and industry. These groups will deliberate in greater detail in their respective fields and a joint declaration will be signed on February 17.--Our Special Correspondent. [Text] [Madras THE HINDU in English 14 Feb 84 p 9]

CSO: 4600/1599

IRAN

U.S. WARNED NOT TO REPEAT 'DEFEATS SUFFERED IN VIETNAM, LEBANON'

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 4 Mar 84 p 2

[Text] Karaj, KEYHAN Correspondent--This week's enemy-destroying prayers and political worship at Karaj, as in previous weeks, were held at this city's congregational mosque, attended by a throng of martyr-fostering people and led by Hojjat ol-Eslam Sharifi.

The speaker preceding the sermons was Hojjat ol-Eslam Moravi, deputy inspector-general and judicial police prosecutor, who spoke in detail on the matter of "Fadak," the danger of Zionism for the Muslim world, and the vigilance of Muslims in their struggle against Zionism.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Sharifi then delivered the Friday sermons. In the first sermon, continuing the discussion of piety and abstention, he talked about the qualities of the pious. He said: Pious people refrain from indulging in three things, because these three things even eradicate the good works of a human being. They are excessive sleep, inappropriate laughter, and overeating. This behaviour permits Satan to influence a human being, and causes one to forget God. Inappropriate laughter has been mentioned especially often in the narratives and traditions of the Prophet.

Continuing the sermon, the Friday Imam of Karaj discussed how a Zionist government has been established in the midst of Muslim nations, as well as the effects of the triumph of the Islamic revolution in the area and among Muslims.

In his second sermon, the Friday Imam of Karaj mentioned recent victories by the combatants of Islam at the fronts, and America's terror of these victories. He said:

The victories of the combatants of Islam were so unexpected for the enemy that they have thrown them into a state of terror of the approaching expansion of Islam and the doom of criminals. This has persuaded them to try to somehow prevent the combatants

of Islam from advancing through the use of threats and false propaganda concerning an impending American attack on Iran. America knows, however, that these threats will not have the slightest effect on the spirit of our combatants, and if they attempt any kind of military invasion of Iran, they will suffer a defeat in this country worse than Vietnam and Lebanon.

Citing the Imam of the nation's recent speech concerning the elections, he then said: The elections are not a monopoly of any class; the people must supervise them and vote for those who are worthy of going to the Majlis. Worthy individuals must become candidates in accordance with their duty; the people and the candidates must participate much more actively in the elections for this Majlis term than they did in the elections for previous terms.

In conclusion, thanking this city's guilds and businessmen for the aid they have given to the fronts, he said: During the last two weeks, the hard-working brothers of the guilds in this municipality have promised around 12 million tomans in aid to the fronts. Last week they also promised around one million tomans in aid to the Relief Committee so that they can assist the needy, the weak, and the afflicted during these holidays.

9310

CSO: 4640/145

IRAN

CHINESE REPORTEDLY MAKE SWITCH IN GULF SUPPORT

Auckland THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD in English 23 Feb 84 p 7

[Text] NZPA London--China has dropped its support of Iraq in the Gulf war and has signed a secret \$1 billion (\$2.16 billion) arms deal with Iran, the Daily Mail newspaper in London reported yesterday.

The paper said the deal could enable Iran to deliver a final knockout blow in the war with Iraq and was personally authorised by the Chinese leader, Mr Deng Xiaoping.

"First deliveries in the two-year deal start next month with a massive supply of 107-millimetre shells for Iran's deadly rocket-launchers. They will be followed by tanks and combat planes," the paper said.

Military experts in the Persian Gulf "see the dramatic intervention as possibly the most decisive single factor in the four-year struggle."

Negotiations

Western intelligence sources were quoted as saying that Syria acted as go-between for the deal.

Negotiations began late last year and reached a climax at a meeting in Damascus on January 19 between the Syrian Premier, Mr Kasam and the Chinese ambassador, Mr Lin Zhionan, the paper said.

Financial arrangements were completed a week later.

The Chinese interest in the deal is aimed at stopping the Soviets from gaining the upper hand in the area, the Daily Mail said.

CSO: 4600/421

IRAN

PAPER EXAMINES RAFSANJANI'S COMMENTS ON MAJNUN ISLAND

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 5 Mar 84 pp 1, 2

[Text] Yesterday's remarks by Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani, the Imam's representative on the Supreme Defense Council, were the most calculated response, intended to persuade international circles to accept the great victories of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Operation Kheybar.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani was asked: Considering the views expressed by some Arab officials who have said that the Islamic Republic has been able to acquire reparations for itself by taking Majnun Island, are the conditions the same as before, or have they changed? He said: Of course, if they agree that this island should belong to us as war damages, and that we extract our compensation from it, we might accept it to cover damages. If this is to be seriously proposed, however, it must first be discussed with the Imam, the Majlis, the President, and the Prime Minister and they must decide, but there remains the trial of Saddam, and he must be tried.

International circles and the imperialist propaganda news network have reacted to Operation Kheybar according to their own inclinations from the beginning. So far none of the world news organizations have reacted appropriately to Iran's strategic victories, while the Iraqi regime, despite all its defeats and withdrawals, continues to benefit from the psychological and news-gathering facilities and preparations of the imperialist propaganda news network. In a speech yesterday, Imam Khomeyni gave a valuable criterion in this regard. He said: When the volume of propaganda against the Islamic Republic of Iran by the enemies of the Islamic revolution increases, it is an indication that the volume of our victories in the war has increased.

The international news organizations say that since neither side fighting in the war allows impartial correspondents to go to the fronts, it is difficult to confirm claims. It seems, however, that the international news organizations have forgotten that they have continuously followed this policy throughout 40 months

of imposed war and victories by the Islamic Republic. It would seem that it has been difficult for propaganda networks to evaluate the truth of the claims made by the two sides during the 40 months of war.

The policy of neutrality would judge that the claims of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Iraqi regime concerning 40 months of war should be assessed and criteria for doing this be discovered. Evidently, however, international propaganda organizations carry the policy of neutrality to the point that it ought not to be in conflict with their own inclinations, and in this it is clear that the main operators of the international imperialist propaganda networks never have any inclination to see the day when the Iraqi regime is decisively defeated by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In view of the manner in which the international news organizations have encountered Iran's recent victories, and view of the lack of an extensive neutral propaganda network, which could make the world aware of the subsequent steps of the Islamic Republic of Iran, it seems that Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani's approach to Majnun Island may be an appropriate tactic for the present state of the war. In the first place, the particulars of this tactic can bring the imperialist propaganda news network face-to-face with what has been done. When Majnun Island alone is capable of satisfying one of the Islamic Republic of Iran's conditions, it should not be so difficult for the international news organizations to assess the scope of the Islamic Republic of Iran's victories in Operation Kheybar. The news imperialists will thus no longer be able to ignore Iran's victories. On the other hand, the above tactic can make the scope of the Iraqi regime's economic defeat clear. When the estimated value of the petroleum on Majnun Island is more than 240 billion dollars, the Iraqi regime and its international supporters can no longer obscure Iran's victories.

It is possible, of course, that this tactic has implications domestically and in connection with the principal stated views and positions of officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It must be said, however, that Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani's comments yesterday cannot be assessed outside the principal strategic framework of the combatants of the Islamic Republic of Iran, for, as the Imam's representative on the Supreme Defense Council said, Saddam's regime, which has committed countless crimes in the war, such as rocketing the defenseless cities of Iran and using chemical weapons, must no longer remain.

It does not appear, therefore, that the issue of war reparations and Iran's mining of the Majnun petroleum Island will change the present course of the war. An advantage of this tactic, however, aside from the features mentioned above, is that world

organizations will no longer be able to portray Iran as warlike. Saddam's supporters must now either draw up a new proposal on the basis of Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani's remarks yesterday, or they must pass over it with indifference. If Saddam's regime and its regional and international supporters ignore the approach taken by Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani yesterday, it will be clear to the people of the world that the talk by Saddam's regime and the West concerning the necessity of stopping the war between Iraq and Iran is no more than a slogan. If, however, Saddam's supporters in the region and the world formulate a new plan on the basis of Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi Rafsanjani's remarks yesterday and make new proposals, then the Islamic Republic of Iran's third condition will arise, which is the trial of the aggressor. In this regard, it is clear that if the supporters of the Iraqi regime accept the trial of Saddam, the minimum outcome will be the fall of the Iraqi regime. If, however, the Islamic Republic of Iran's third condition is ignored by Saddam's supporters, there will be no change in the course of the war, because if the Islamic Republic of Iran has been able to secure its first condition in 40 months of war, which was the removal of the aggressor from its soil, and if the Islamic Republic of Iran has also been able to secure its second condition by taking over Iraq's oil island, securing the third condition, which is the trial of the Iraqi regime, will not be so difficult. It is clear, however, that the Islamic Republic of Iran's third condition will be secured on the battlefield. The combatants of the Islamic Republic of Iran have now prepared the way on the battlefield for the trial of the Iraqi regime. It seems that God has arranged things in such a way that the oppressed will secure their conditions by their own hands.

9310

CSO:4640/144

COMMENTARY ANALYZES POSSIBLE U.S. ROLE IN THE GULF

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Feb 84 pp 1, 8

[Article by Mushahid Hussain: "After Defeat in Lebanon: Is America Gearing Up for Gulf Intervention?"]

[Text] ISLAMABAD, Feb. 24--Recent events in Lebanon have brought about a profound change in the balance of forces in the Middle East, whose key elements are the emergence of Syria and Iran as crucial factors, a major humiliating defeat for American military power and political objectives and the increased possibility of US military intervention in the Gulf. These developments have effectively reversed the gains which the Zionists achieved by their 1982 invasion and occupation of Lebanon. The American defeat in Lebanon has been on a very grand scale: a failure to project US-Zionist military power, it is a failure to promote Zionification of Lebanon and it is a failure to prop a minority regime in that Muslim country of 3 million. On top of it all, it is the most significant failure of American strategy in the Third World since the Islamic Revolution in 1979. Concurrently, it seems that the Battle for the Baghdad Baathists survival has begun and events in the Gulf War too seem to be reaching a certain climax with almost the familiar list of participants.

Already, it seems, as reflected in military preparations and diplomatic activity, the United States in collaboration with its Western and regional allies is seriously pondering the possibility of some sort of direct military intervention in the Gulf region. A spokesman of the US 7th Fleet has already confirmed that an American Navy battle-group led by the aircraft carrier "Midway" is operating in the Northern Arabian Sea, close to the theatre of operations in the Gulf war. According to reports, the US Navy task force has been sent to the area "to keep the Straits of Hormuz open". In a statement to the House of Commons in London, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher also stated that "British warships could join in to back any American military action to maintain the Gulf oil supplies that are threatened by the Iran-Iraq War." The Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah is also currently in Britain and reports suggest that he will request London to back Washington in any possible military move in the Gulf. Additionally, the Chiefs of Staff and Defence Ministers of the six Member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council meeting last week, also expressed concern on "threats to the security of the region". In fact, the GCC's Secretary General Abdullah Yaquub Bishara also warned the participants in the

parleys that "the situation in the region was unstable and the danger of nearby wars is threatening us and can reach us if we do not work hard to contain them". Concurrently, reports emanating from Washington speak of the US army having formed two light infantry divisions designed for quick deployment to potential world trouble spots. These two new divisions will take four days to deploy to parts of Asia and the Middle-East, where a normal division would take about twelve days. Among its special features, the new divisions which will have 10,200 men each, can be sent into areas with primitive air-fields, are self-contained for 48 hours of combat without reinforcement and are also equipped with special kind of weaponry. That the other Super-Power namely, the Soviet Union, is not a disinterested observer in this whole situation, is reflected by reports of the 30-minute meeting between the new Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko and US Vice President George Bush in Moscow during the Andropov funeral. Urging Soviet-American cooperation in restraining regional conflicts, Mr. Chernenko was quoted as having told Mr. Bush that both Super Powers should see to it "that regional conflicts did not get out of control".

American Strategy

With events in the Gulf war coming to a head after the Americans still smarting from their defeat in Lebanon, the questions which come to mind pertain to the nature of political and military fall-out from the destruction of the post-1982 Lebanese status-quo and possible options for the United States in the Gulf war. Both these situations, namely Lebanon and the Gulf War, are inextricably linked to each other and they form part of a new crescent of radicalism right from Iran through Syria and of course now including Lebanon following the liberation of much of Beirut by the Muslim Militias. Both the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 and the Muslim liberation of much of Lebanon in 1984 have certain areas of commonality and signify two of the biggest failures of American strategy in the Third-World. 1979 clearly showed that the regime of the Shah which was propped, promoted and protected by a wide range of American interests failed to suppress what is probably the biggest popular uprising in modern history. That also signified the failure of the post-Vietnam, US strategy using regional surrogates or what Zbigniew Brzezinski called "regional influentials" to defend American interests. This failure was later repeated by the assassination of Sadat, by the failure of Saddam and the most recent surrender of Gemayel

Following the Islamic Revolution, the United States had devised a new strategy via the Rapid Deployment Force, now referred to as the US Central Command (CENTCOM), whereby the Americans would stop using Muslim rulers directly but would use their own troops for interventionism backed by a militaristic Israel. This new equation roughly amounted to: Intervention plus Israel equals status-quo and stability in the area. That strategy too has now collapsed as demonstrated by the manifest failure of sophisticated fire-power at the hands of a determined, highly-motivated manpower. Therein lies the biggest lesson of both events, in Lebanon and prior to that in Iran, and also perhaps in other parts of the Muslim world where new phenomenon seems to be emerging which has taken most Westerners and dependent Muslim rulers by complete surprise: With motivated people and organisations deeply rooted among their masses, they have no fear of death and are prepared to lay down

their lives for the cause they believe in. It is such motivation which leads so-called "suicide squads" to blow up 240 American marines or the American embassies in other parts of the Muslim world. For Westerners, particularly Americans, who are used to believing that "the way to man's heart lies through his stomach," such ideological fervour and altruistic commitment to a cause which is perceived higher than material rewards, is simply beyond comprehension. It is thus no accident that a well-oiled propaganda machine has been attacking what are called "shite fundamentalists" in the same way as "communist extremists" were attacked in yesteryears. So much so, to an average Westerner, Shite is a word which has become synonymous with something "dangerous and bad."

Lost Manhood

There is no doubt that Syria has come on top because of Hafez Al Asad's resolute resistance to America's bullying tactics as well as the fact that with the Gulf war on, Syria was free to concentrate itself in Lebanon because its other adversary, Iraq, was already engaged with Iran. The new situation also marks the beginning of the end of Yassar Arafat's role as an independent political-military factor in the Middle-East. He is now merely an appendage of what are called 'moderate' Arab Regimes, who seek protection and guidance from Washington. It is an irony of history that Arafat, who once stood as a proud liberation fighter, has been consigned to such a role.

In its policy towards the Third World, the US has with irritating frequency, demonstrated a recourse to John Wayneism: the instincts of a macho gun-fighter to-shoot from the hip in order to restore his lost manhood. After the fiasco in Beirut, Ronald Reagan definitely needs a "victory" in some far-away strange-sounding place so that he could tell the folks back home how he has managed to "restore American prestige". After all when the United States Marines landed in Grenada (an island of 100,000 people!) Reagan's popularity rating at home soared. The Americans, as well as their regional allies, know very well that the fall of the Saddam regime means the creation of an arc of anti-imperialist Muslim states stretching through Iran, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon.

Three factors will determine the manner in which the United States will act in the next few weeks in the Gulf. Firstly, the ground situation of the war. The Iranians have made it quite clear that the Gulf war, which has gone on for over three years, will only end with the ouster of Saddam and with the demolition of the Baathist regime in Iraq. Anything short of this will simply not be acceptable. If the Revolutionary Guards are close to achieving this goal or if in the process, after attempts are made to choke off Iranian oil supplies, Teheran chooses to close the Straits of Hormuz American military intervention in one form or the other will be highly probable. The Second factor will be the role and acquiescence of regional States to this move particularly Pakistan, and Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, Oman, Qatar and Bahrain. If countries like, say, Pakistan or Kuwait or the UAE publicly condemn and oppose any proposed American military move, then Washington will find itself in a difficult diplomatic situation. The third crucial factor in any possible American military intervention in the Gulf would be Ronald Reagan's electoral prospects and the perceptions by his political advisers as to how a military move would affect these.

Grenada Model

The key element in this thinking would be whether Reagan can pull off another Grenada-style strike. In part, if the US chooses to seek recourse to military force against Iran, it will essentially follow the Grenada Model with one important exception. In such a scenario, the US will announce that it was "invited" to intervene in the Gulf by certain regional countries in order to "defend and protect oil supplies passing through their international waterways". It will, in such a situation seek support of such willing Western allies as France and Britain. The one important exception would, in all probability, be that ground troops will not be used, only air power and naval bombardment. After Lebanon, the Americans clearly now realise that sending in the Marines is akin to sinking into a quagmire.

However, those who know the area well have little doubt that it is a No-Win situation for Washington. The present circumstances also provide a test case for the behaviour of Muslim states, most of whom have taken an amoral stand on the Gulf war. While many have loudly condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, only few have spoken up against the Iraqi invasion of Iran. If now they choose to be silent on any possible American military intervention on the Gulf, they will have committed a blunder and betrayal worse than what they did in the 1982 Battle of Beirut. American policy makers who may be thinking of quickly unlearning the lesson of Lebanon should understand that power cannot be measured simply in terms of military might. In Muslim societies, new factors and new realities are emerging and power needs to be measured and understood in terms of popular support ideological fervour, mass mobilisation, grass-roots motivation and faith in one's cause. It is these elements which are central to understanding the emerging Muslim World post-Islamic Revolution and recent events in Lebanon and the Gulf war.

CSO: 4600/419

LEADER WARNS AGAINST INVOLVEMENT IN THE GULF

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 26 Feb 84 p 8

[Article by Ashraf Hashmi]

[Text]

ISLAMABAD, Feb. 25: Mian Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri, Central Information Secretary of the defunct Tehrik-i-Istiqlal, has warned against American intervention in the Gulf war and said that if either super power makes a move in this vitally sensitive region to promote its own interests, the other will not remain a silent spectator and this would be disastrous for the region as well as for world peace.

Talking to 'The Muslim' here today, the TI leader emphasised that Pakistan should immediately warn the United States against any such move. He said it was highly unlikely that 'Washington would undertake a major foreign policy initiative in this area without first sounding out countries like Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Oman. If Pakistan, he said, sends the right signal to the US it would be rendering a useful service both to the United States and to the cause of world peace.

Firmly maintaining that Pakistan should follow a policy of genuine non-alignment, he said, the need to re-emphasise this had arisen chiefly because of two grave developments in our region, i.e.

the fighting in Lebanon and the gulf war. Since there was genuine fear of the super powers getting embroiled in these conflicts, Pakistan must be wary and should not allow itself to get sucked into this widening whirlpool, he added.

On the issue of Lebanon, he said, there could be no doubt where Pakistan's sympathies lay. However, on the Iran-Iraq question, there was much greater need for Pakistan to resist any attempt from any quarter to adopt a partisan attitude. It must make it perfectly clear that it would not support any outside intervention in the area on any pretext.

Referring to an article of his leader, Air Marshal (Retd) Asghar Khan, recently published in a newspaper, he said, it was for this reason that the tehrik chief had been constrained to re-emphasise the importance of non-alignment for Pakistan. There is no doubt that the Air Marshal realises the danger that Pakistan faces and the only way to keep out of harm's way is to adhere strictly to a policy of non-alignment.

CSO: 4600/419

GOVERNMENT-PRESS RELATIONS ANALYZED

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Feb 84 p 4

[Article in the "Spectrum" column by Khalid Akhtar: "State of the Press"]

[Text The disharmony in the government-Press relationship explains most of the anomalies in our national life. The more stringent the laws to muzzle the Press the greater these anomalies. Yet each succeeding government has sought remedies in extreme measures by imposing fresh curbs on the news media, thus depriving itself and the nation of the benefit of a free Press.

In Pakistan, the concept of a free Press has remained a myth. It has not fared well here even when there was democratic rule in the country. Bhutto came down on it as heavily as did General Ayub Khan. There has been no relief for it and it has to wage a relentless struggle to maintain a semblance of freedom and independence. Periodicals have been arbitrarily closed and journalists summarily jailed.

Today the Press is subject to all kinds of laws. There are martial law regulations, the Press and Publications Ordinance and above all, the system of 'Press Advice'. But the most effective weapon in the government's hands has been its 'prerogative' to distribute its advertisements. It has used this 'power of the purse' to reward those who toe the official line and to punish the few who dare to violate the unending stream of "Press Advice" that flows from the keepers of state piety.

It goes to the credit of the present regime that despite martial law and censorship it has allowed what it has described constructive criticism of its policies. At one stage there was talk of repealing the Press & Publications Ordinance and replacing it with a 'Press Council' to regulate the Press. But these hopes now appear to be vanishing. If vital amendments are being considered in the Constitution without the approval of the parliament, it should not pose any problem or difficulty to strike off the Press & Publication Ordinance from the statute book. Similarly, the setting up of the Press Council should not wait for resumption of the political process.

The most intriguing aspect of the whole situation is that as the government moves closer to its deadline of restoring democratic rule in the country, its general attitude seems to be stiffening. The ban on the student' unions has

come at an odd time. The quantum of Press Advice has increased and their violations promptly punished. All this has only added to the distrust that has widened the gulf between the government and the political parties and the Press and the Government. Sadly, we have moved a step back from constructive dialogue and rapprochement.

Tolerance

The present regime's responsibility towards the Press is two-fold. Its adherence to Islamic principles should make it more tolerant of criticism. In Islam there is no such thing as censorship. The Khulafa-e-Rashdeen were publicly criticised and none was imprisoned or punished for taking this liberty. On the contrary they exhibited the highest degree of magnanimity in answering charges levelled against them. It was the finest demonstration of Islamic equality and Islamic democracy. Secondly, the regime's professed commitment to democracy makes it obligatory on it to work for a free Press. But unfortunately there is a gap in what the government has stood for and what it has actually practised. This contradiction has not only marred the Press-Government relationship but has also added confusion to scene.

The state of the Press reflects on a country's government. The freer the Press, the healthier the government. But a Press groaning under all kinds of curbs only betrays the weakness of the government, notwithstanding its claims to the contrary. The blowing to shreds of the authoritarian rule of the seemingly invincible Ayub Khan overnight is a classic example of this historical truth. The Press & Publications Ordinance did not come to the strongman's rescue; it rather made his downfall unceremonious.

The temptation to seek refuge behind the gagged Press has always remained too great. Lacking popular mandate, most of the regimes here have preferred to live in the false security provided by a shackled Press. Even the late Bhutto who had ascended to power with a pledge to scrap the Press & Publication Ordinance in the end decided to let it linger. Repressive measures once adopted are not easily done away with. Our whole body-politic bears testimony to this. Opposition here has been seen as a bunch of rebels and hence crushed accordingly. This is a treatment which every political party has received here.

There is a general complaint that the standard of Pakistan Press is not up to the mark. It could not have been otherwise. The emphasis in the newspaper offices has been to play 'safe'. Truths have been concealed, for their disclosure could have put the newspapers in trouble. Independent and free thinking has been considered the greatest crime and hence discouraged. The journalists could have grown only in an atmosphere that would encourage initiative and free comment. But a flourishing Press has never been in the scheme of things of any government here. The criticism and praise of the government of the day has been a single criterion of positive and negative reporting. This has certainly not been the proper atmosphere for talent grooming.

News-Shy Media

Functioning under these circumstances, our Press has been found wanting in discharging its duties which it has owed to itself, to the government and above all to the nation. It has been forced to conceal facts that really matter and has been allowed to divulge only that which matters least. This has made a news hungry common man turn to the BBC. It is a pity that with our media becoming increasingly news-shy, our people have to look for information to other countries.

The myth that a controlled Press helps the government to sort out the issues the way it likes best has more than once been exploded. Ayub Khan in the end found that, far from finding solutions to the nation's problems, he had only complicated them. A chained Press may bring some temporary gains or it may help accomplish short-term objectives. But in the long run it has inevitably done more harm to the government than good. The charm of a controlled Press may be too alluring but its consequences are equally destructive.

Of late there have been frequent references to what has been described as 'balanced newspapers'. If it means, as has been implied by certain quarters, that such papers should only project government's viewpoint, there seems to be no room left for the newspapers other than those of the National Press Trust. Any such idea or proposal is fraught with serious consequences not only for the Press itself but for the government and the country as well. For a moment the reported circular asking the government departments to buy only 'balanced newspapers' (meaning the Trust papers), had caused serious apprehensions in the Press. But the government's denial has given new hope. All is not lost-yet.

It was in this tense and uncertain background that a joint meeting of the APNS and CPNE was held in Rawalpindi a few days back. It called for the repeal of the Press & Publications Ordinance and the setting up of a Press Council at the earliest. The two bodies' office-bearers also held talks with the Information Minister and the Information Secretary. The parleys do not appear to have made much headway. As has been the practice till now, decisions have been postponed to another time. How the government finally decides to resolve the matter remains to be seen. It may have many grievances against the Press, and some of them may be genuine, but a free Press with all its minus points will finally work to its advantage. and a chained Press will serve this government no better than it has served the previous regimes.

CSO: 4600/419

PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS LIKELY IN OCTOBER

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Feb 84 p 8

[Text] QUETTA, Feb. 24--There is a possibility of the provincial elections to be held in the second half of October this year, informed sources told 'The Muslim' here today.

The proposed election would be held on the recommendations of the Ansari Commission Report which advocates elections on non-party basis.

These sources also disclosed that restricted political activities will be allowed and its duration would not exceed more than two months.

The proposed decision of holding provincial elections in October would have two advantages: firstly, the weather will be pleasant and secondly the congenial and peaceful atmosphere of educational institutions particularly at college and university level, as this period will be the examination season for the students throughout the country. Besides, a majority of the educational staff will be available for polling duties, the sources added.

About delimitation of the constituencies, the sources said, no major amendments were expected it would rather be on the basis of 1977 elections. The Baluchistan Assembly had 40 seats in 1977 election and a constituency comprised 60 thousand people while after the 1980's census a constituency would comprise over on lakh people. According to provincial election sources, all arrangements for holding elections are ready and we are only waiting for the green signal to proceed ahead.

CSO: 4600/419

MRD SAID SEEKING WIDER SUPPORT

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Feb 84 p 8

[Text] LAHORE, Feb. 24--The MRD has called upon all social and professional organisations as well as political parties and groups outside this body to rally round the MRD in its present struggle and thus avert the "grave dangers, internal and external, to the security, sovereignty and stability of the Federation of Pakistan" with the support of the entire nation.

This is stated in a resolution adopted in the Central Action Committee meeting held here on Feb. 23. It was released to the press by Malik Mohammad Qasim, the Secretary General of MRD today at a press conference. He said that the military regime was planning some sort of a "fake election" this year on the basis of Gen. Ziaul Haq's formula of 12th August 1983. But MRD would reject any election formula which deviates from that framework and would carry its struggle till their objective was achieved.

The resolution said: "The MRD conscious of its historical role as the champion of the sovereign democratic right of the eight crore of people of Pakistan, had rejected Gen. Ziaul Haq formula of August 12, 1983 and launched a mass struggle for the restoration of the 1973 constitution, holding of general elections under it, and the election laws made there under the transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people. MRD stands committed to that objective and would not back out of that commitment made to the nation".

MRD has called upon all political, social and professional organisations of workers, peasants, students, teachers, lawyers and journalists, and all political parties outside the MRD to rally round the MRD in its present struggle and thus successfully avert the grave danger, internal and external, to the security, sovereignty and stability of the Federation of Pakistan.

The resolution said: "General Ziaul Haq had seized power seven years ago with the promise to hold general elections within 90 days and hand over the power to the elected representatives of the people.

"He repeatedly reaffirmed his commitment to hold election. Side by side he had been working systematically to consolidate his regime and perpetuate himself".

The resolution added that no one "should have any illusions about the intentions of the present regime which was to rule for ever, by feeding the people on false promises and propoganda and ridiculing the political parties and political leadership. The regime had been trying to depoliticize the people. It further said that, the military government through "brute force, tried to stamp out, popular resistance, and sought to break the people's will for basic freedom and their spirit for self-respect and self conficent".

The MRD resolution said: "What the nation wants and what the MRD is committed to is general elections within the framework of the unanimously adopted constitution of 1973 and the election law made thereunder as on 4th July 1977. Even a minor deviation from that framework will refuce the so-called election to a futile exercise as any provincial or national assembly so elected will not be a free institution".

The resolution further said that the regime planned to pick and choose the candidates to contest the election, irrespective of the fact whether elections were held on party or non-party basis. "The proposed veto powers of President to nominate 20 per cent of National Security Council dominated by representatives of armed forces which would a" supra-forum with power to overrule the parliament and other secret devices are meant to turn the elected assemblies and parliament into powerless rubber stamp institutions".

It further said that the non-party election which the military regime had been promoting had been rejected by the political parties as well as by the people.

The resolution said that the "nation should not fall into the trap.

CSO: 4600/419

AUTHORITIES URGED TO MOVE SICK IMPRISONED LEADERS TO HOSPITALS

Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 26 Feb 84 p 8

[Text]

LAHORE, Feb. 25: The Central Action Committee of MRD which met here for two days in a closed door session, adopted a number of resolutions expressing concern over the "rapidly deteriorating" health of a number of political leaders and workers in various jails of the country and demanded that they should be immediately shifted to hospitals in their home districts and provided adequate medical care.

The meeting also demanded that all political prisoners in the Machh jail be shifted to jails in their home districts in Sind.

The ailing leaders include Rasul Baksh Paleejo, Mairaj Mohammad Khan, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, Sardar Shoukat Ali, Sher Mohammad Bhatti, Ch. Mohammad Akram, Mukhtar Awan, Malik Faiz Mohammad, Arbab Abdul Qadir, Haji Ghulam Sarwar Yasinza, Malik Usman Kansil, Malik Faiz Mohammad Kakar, Dr. Inayatullah.

A resolution unanimously adopted at the meeting also expressed profound grief and concern over the recent killings of people in air raids by Afghan aircraft in the NWFP. The resolution said according to the government's own official reports, this was not the first incident of its kind but there had been about 400 violations of Pakistan's borders in the past. It said that it had thus "utterly failed to defend our

borders and protect the lives and properties of Pakistani citizens." The resolution said in a situation like this, the only sane course left was to "have a direct dialogue with Afghanistan."

Another resolution adopted at the meeting squarely condemned the arbitrary ejection of Haris/tenants throughout Pakistan particularly in Sind, and the allotment of large parcels of land in Sind to absentee landlords, ostensibly for cultivation and cattle-breeding. It said by giving a "new and naive definition of the term 'tenant' to exclude lessees from its meaning and connotation, thousands of poor Haris/tenants holding leasehold rights in respect of small parcels of land were denied the protection against arbitrary ejections provided in the Land Reforms of 1972." It said allotment at a nominal price of hundreds of thousands of acres of agricultural land to absentee landlords and prominent industrialists, particularly on the Karachi-Hyderabad super and national highways and Thatta, was being done to enable them to make huge profits by selling the same when prices shoot up. Further it was also intended to help them to evade income tax on their black money and hoardings by showing these as income earned from the cultivation of these lands.

The Central Action Committee strongly condemned the ban imposed on students unions in the country. A resolution passed to this effect said the right to form unions and to pursue their

activities without any undue interference and prejudice was imperative for the restoration of healthy and peaceful academic atmosphere in the universities and colleges. Instead of lifting the undesirable ban on students unions in NWFP and Baluchistan, the imposition of a ban in Sind and the Punjab had aggravated the situation. The unrest among the students community had completely destroyed the atmosphere, and conditions in the academic institutions making it impossible for the students to pursue their studies. The resolution assured its support to the students community without any discrimination, and cooperation in their just struggle against what it described as the "oppressive policies" of the regime and demanded immediate restoration of students unions in all provinces and release of every student besides the withdrawal of all cases against them.

The Central Action Committee of MRD condemned the continued ban on trade unions in PIA and other state-owned enterprises. It also condemned the unwarranted closure of two ghee mills, rendering thousands of workers jobless. A resolution said that in view of the steadily mounting unemployment, such arbitrary dismissals and retrenchments only exposed the "callous indifference" of the present regime towards the working class. MRD expressed its sympathy and support to such victims of the martial law regime and assured them of its commitment to undo the injustice done to them.

BRIEFS

ENGINEERING COLLEGE PLANNED--MULTAN, March 2--An engineering College affiliated to the Engineering University, Lahore, with the cost of Rs 21 crores, would be set up in Multan during the current Five-Year Plan. In a meeting, the Vice-Chancellor of the Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan declared this. He also told that a scheme for setting up an agriculture college in Multan had been sent to the Governments for approval. He assured that Multan Division would be enjoying both the colleges in near future. [Text] [Karachi MORNING NEWS in English 3 Mar 84 p 5]

LEADER ON ARMY'S ROLE--Defunct "Pakistan Jeeway Party" leader Mir Nabi Bux Zahri addressed a Press conference in Multan. He demanded that Pakistan Army must be given a permanent chance to play vital role in the Government. The Government could not run well without the due assistance of the army, he said. He also stated that an 11-member goodwill mission was ready to visit India soon. The proposed mission would be headed by himself and it would meet prominent political leaders of India, including the Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. [Text] [Karachi MORNING NEWS in English 3 Mar 84 p 5]

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BOOST TO EXPORTS PLANNED

Dubayy KHALEEJ TIMES in English 4 Feb 84 p 13

[Text]

COLOMBO—Sri Lanka has staked its fortunes on a systemised export programme to sustain its open market economy.

Propelled by incentives from the current budget which has placed exports as a top priority national endeavour Colombo is veering away from traditional exports of tea, rubber and coconut to diversify and reach far flung world markets for any exportable commodity of the island.

The products range from fruits and vegetables to medicinal herbs, spices, cut flowers and cane baskets. The markets earmarked are: United States, Europe, South Africa and more specifically the Middle East, where more than 150,000 Sri Lankan expatriates are at work.

A Swiss firm operating a passion fruit factory in Kenya is to come over to set up another processing plant in central Sri Lanka to export the juice to Europe. The firm, Passi Limited will collaborate with Lankan firm Lanka Canneries Limited and the exporter Pan-Am Foods.

Passion fruit which grows in abundance in Sri Lanka had a slump in the local market following over production but the Lankan Ministry of Trade which is right behind the export exercise is confident that the market will settle down when large scale exports start this year.

The Lankan Export Development Board which encourages the setting up of export production villages where specially identified products are grown for export will participate in the passion fruit project under a World Bank programme of assistance.

The scheme will also provide a service facility to several peripheral units by extending technical assistance in cultivation, supply of planting material and other inputs and purchase of

the produce on a contract basis.

In yet another village 20 acres have been earmarked to manufacture cane baskets for markets in the United States. The baskets will also be used to export betel leaf to the Gulf region and Pakistan. The requirements of betel exporters are 10,000 baskets per month.

The ministry will also resume exports of cut flowers and orchids to South Africa taking advantage of direct flights between Colombo and Johannesburg. This is besides the exports already in operation to the Middle East and West Europe.

Sri Lanka has no diplomatic relations with South Africa but has traded extensively with Pretoria.

"This is trade—not politics. Do not mix the two," Sri Lanka's Minister of Trade Lalith Athulathmudali told exporters in Colombo.

In the north of the island tappers of Palmyrah palm trees will be producing jaggery and fibre to service the firm Gaver Horowitz buying the products to be exported through the Consolidated Exports Corporation of Colombo.

The Sri Lankan government has gone a little further on inducements and has asked producers to import certain products if the local supply is inadequate to keep the supply lines going and export commitments met and also to maintain an uninterrupted local production. Yet, no raw material will be allowed to be imported for this export exercise.

Meanwhile the Ministry of Shipping is also exploring the possibility of using reefer containers to export vegetables and fruits to the Gulf and to Europe through Amsterdam. Sri Lanka's national carrier, Air Lanka has offered incentives to fly Colombo's export cargo at cost rate to bolster the island's export drive.

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